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ABSTRACT

This document consists of 10 issues of the newsletter "Community Update," containing articles on community and family involvement in education. Article topics include: preparing America's future teachers; reports on satellite town meetings; E-rate (education rate) discounts for telecommunications services in schools and libraries; President Clinton's Call to Action for American Education in the 21st century; 1998 and 1999 education budgets; early childhood development; summer reading programs; public school choice; opportunities for volunteerism and community service; role of parents as teachers; "America Goes Back to School" initiative; Education Excellence Partnership (EEP) public service advertisements; American fourth-graders exceed the international average in mathematics and science; college and career preparation; voluntary national testing initiative; education priorities in the balanced budget agreement; "America Reads Challenge"; excerpts from speeches given by U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley; importance of quality child care, after-school, and summer programs; U.S. Postal Service program "Celebrate the Century"; Smithsonian's National Museum of American Art print and video study kits; taking algebra and geometry early puts students on the road to college and good careers; quality teaching; millennium celebrations; role of religious communities and community learning centers in improving education; arts education; education standards; and excerpts from the "State of American Education" speech by Richard W. Riley. Each issue includes an insert on family involvement, "Partnership for Family Involvement in Education." (SWC)

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Nos. 46-55
April 1997-March 1998

U.S. Department of Education

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Community Update

No. 46, April 1997
U.S. Department of Education

A Teaching Force for the 21st Century

Editor's note: *On April 17-18, U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley will host a national forum entitled "Attracting and Preparing Teachers for the 21st Century" in Washington, D.C. The forum will include 50 of the 1997 Teachers of the Year, as well as 50 university and teacher education leaders by invitation only, for a candid discussion about how we can attract, prepare and support the many new teachers who will be entering this demanding profession in the years ahead. Additional information is available by calling 1-800-USA-LEARN. Below is an excerpt from Secretary Riley's fourth annual State of American Education address pertaining to preparing America's future teachers.*

I urge sustained attention to the task of preparing America's future teachers. In the next 10 years, we need to ... replace a generation of teachers who are about to retire, and to keep up with rising enrollments.

But we are not as prepared as we should be for this enormous undertaking and there are several reasons why. We do not, for example, do a very good job of recruiting people to this demanding profession, and we have really failed to do justice to the task of recruiting talented minority candidates and males.

Another reason: our colleges of education and departments of education are too often treated like forgotten stepchildren in our system of higher education. And when eager new teachers enter the classroom for the first time, we give them little, if any, help. As a result of this longstanding "sink or swim" approach, we are losing 30 percent of our new teachers in the first three years. In addition, 25 percent of our nation's current teachers are now teaching out of their field.

New teachers--like new lawyers and new doctors--should have to prove that they are qualified to meet high standards before getting a license. This would mean that prospective teachers are able to pass a rigorous, performance-based assessment of what they know and what they are able to do. And, once a new teacher is in a classroom, he or she should be linked to master teachers during the first few years of teaching.

In the next 10 years, two million teachers will be needed to replace a generation of teachers who are about to retire.

Teaching is a demanding profession, and it will be even more demanding in the future. That is why the president and I strongly support the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and its goal of certifying over 100,000 master teachers in the next decade. I challenge every school in the nation to have at least one board-certified teacher on your faculty.

Just as we expect a great deal from our students, we have an obligation to expect a great deal of ourselves in supporting America's teachers.

"Just as we expect a great deal from our students, we have an obligation to expect a great deal of ourselves in supporting America's teachers."

Special Insert on Family Involvement
(See inside)

Community Update *is available on the World Wide Web at <http://www.ed.gov/G2K/community>*

Coordinates for the April Satellite Town Meeting

C-Band: *Satellite GE1, Orbital Location 103 degrees West; Transponder 22; Vertical Polarity; Channel 22; Downlink Frequency 4140 MHZ; Audio Subcarriers 6.2 MHZ (Spanish) and 6.8 MHZ (English).*

Ku-Band: *Satellite SBS-6, Orbital Location 74 degrees West; Transponder 15; Horizontal Polarity; Channel 15; Downlink Frequency 12068 MHZ; Audio Subcarriers 6.2 MHZ (Spanish) and 6.8 MHZ (English).*

Entitled "Charter Schools, Magnet Schools and Other Choices in Public Education," the hour-long Town Meeting will air on Tuesday, April 15 at 8:00 p.m. Eastern time. Call 1-800-USA-LEARN for further information or to register your participation.

May Town Meeting Will Focus on Helping America Become a Reading, Literate Society

The May Satellite Town Meeting will explore ways that schools, businesses, communities and libraries can support the *America Reads Challenge* by helping children read well by the end of third grade. The Read*Write*Now! challenge will also be spotlighted to help schools, communities, libraries and families improve children's reading and writing skills during the summer months. Entitled "Becoming a Reading, Literate Society," the hour-long program will air on Tuesday, May 20 at 8:00 p.m. Eastern time.

The Department of Education produces the Satellite Town Meeting series in partnership with the National Alliance of Business and the Center for Workforce Preparation with support from the Bayer Foundation, the Procter and Gamble Fund, Microsoft, Inc., and SC Johnson Wax. Broadcast and cable partners include Discovery Communications, the Public Broadcasting System, and Channel One. The program will be closed-captioned and simulcast in Spanish.

The satellite coordinates are as follows . . .

C-Band: Galaxy 4, Orbital Location 99 degrees West; Transponder 9; Horizontal Polarity; Channel 9; Downlink Frequency 3880 MHZ; Audio Subcarriers 6.2 MHZ (Spanish) and 6.8 MHZ (English).

Ku-Band: Satellite SBS-6, Orbital Location 74 degrees West; Transponder 15; Horizontal Polarity; Channel 15; Downlink Frequency 12068 MHZ; Audio Subcarriers 6.2 MHZ (Spanish) and 6.8 MHZ (English).

To participate in the Satellite Town Meeting, ask your local Public Broadcasting System (PBS) member station or Chamber of Commerce if your group can use the facility as a downlink site. Call 1-800-USA-LEARN for further information or to register your participation. CU

FCC to Decide Future of E-Rate

Billions of dollars in discounts for technology may be available to schools and libraries if the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) supports the education rate (E-rate) in its deliberations on May 8. If the E-rate is established, every public and private school in the nation would be eligible for discounts for telecommunications services ranging from 20 to 90 percent on a sliding scale formula.

The discounts would be especially beneficial to rural and urban schools that have high rates of poverty, given that the discount level will be determined by a combination of two factors: geographic location and the percentage of students who are eligible for free or reduced-price lunches.

These discounts would include Internet access (dial-up, direct access and E-mail), internal connections (internal wires, routers and network file servers), as well as installation and maintenance costs. To provide flexibility for schools and libraries, all commercially available telecommunications services would be eligible for discounts, including telephone lines, coaxial cable, fiber optics, as well as cellular and satellite communications. Funding to support this initiative will come from the Universal Service Fund that is administered by an independent fund administrator at a total of up to $2.25 billion per year.

The FCC will vote to accept, modify or reject the final rules to implement the E-rate on May 8. If the FCC approves this initiative, funding would be available for the 1997 school year. For more information pertaining to the FCC hearing on May 8, access the World Wide Web at <http://www.ed.gov/MailingLists/EdInfo/0234.html>. CU

Partnership for Family Involvement in Education

Parental Involvement Is Key, National Town Meeting Audience Learns

"Making Connections," a 90-minute National Town Meeting co-sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education and the National PTA aired on Tuesday, March 11 to a live audience of over 250 PTA officials in Washington, D.C. The teleconference linked 150 family and school groups across the country in a national conversation via satellite and focused on ways families and schools can work together to improve the quality of education.

The program was hosted by U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley, National PTA Vice President Shirley Igo, Director of the *America Reads Challenge*, Carol Rasco and National PTA President-elect, Lois Jean White. The program was moderated by Susan Rook of CNN's *Talkback Live*, and featured panels of involved parents, educators, business leaders and members of state and local PTAs.

"I've said many times that parent and community involvement are the essential ingredients, perhaps the most crucial element, of our effort to build stronger schools and increase student achievement," Secretary Riley said.

The show comprised two segments: "Getting Parents Involved" and "Improving Reading, Math and Science in Schools." Viewers learned of successful strategies for raising the level of parental involvement in schools, as well as how parents can become leaders for real change in the classroom and in their communities, and how schools can become more welcoming to family involvement. In addition, viewers heard success stories from parents and educators who have implemented high standards in reading, math and science within their respective communities and schools.

"Making Connections" National Town Meeting panelists pose with Secretary Riley.

Dr. Robert Watkins, a guest panelist and superintendent of the Independence, Missouri public schools, emphasized the importance of parental involvement in children's education. "The greater chance of a student's success is directly correlated with parent involvement," Dr. Watkins said.

Mayor Richard Daley of Chicago joined Secretary Riley in the studio to discuss ways that parents can work with elected officials and civic leaders to improve the quality of education in their local schools. "The key to a successful city or a society is a better education...That requires all of us. It's not one person's responsibility, it's all of our responsibility," Mayor Daley said.

Virginia Thompson, director of the Family Math program in Berkeley, California agreed. "Parents are important. They are more important than the teachers," she said. CU

Janice Melvin, coordinator of parent involvement for Washington, D.C. public schools, conducts MegaSkills training for teachers. For information, contact the Home and School Institute, MegaSkills Education Center, 1500 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005.

Calendar

April 13-15 *Toll-free hotline service offered during specified hours by the National Association of Elementary School Principals on a wide range of school-related issues. English hotline: 1-800-944-1601. Spanish hotline: 1-800-753-5090.*

April 14 *Apple PIE (Parent Involvement in Education) Awards Deadline (See article for submission information).*

May 15-16 *Business and Education Conference "Better Education is Everybody's Business" in Boston, Mass. For information, contact The Conference Board by phone at 212-339-0345, via fax at 212-980-7014, or E-mail at <orders@conference-board.org>*

June 12-14 *Fourth Annual Conference on Character Building. For information, contact Michael Bocian, The Communitarian Network, 2130 H Street, N.W., Suite 714J, Washington, D.C. 20052.*

October 23-25 *National Parents Day Coalition Conference "Strengthening Families--Building Communities" Partnerships for a SMART (Strong, Motivated, Active, Responsible, Tolerant) America. For registration information, call 202-530-0849.*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The 1997 Read*Write*Now kit is scheduled for release in early May. Families can request one regular kit, and community based tutoring programs working with many children can request one camera ready kit by calling 1-800-USA-LEARN.

- April 14 is the deadline for nominations for the Apple PIE Awards (Parent Involvement in Education). The competition is co-sponsored by *Working Mother* magazine, Teachers College at Columbia University, and the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education. Your nomination packet should include: names and phone numbers of nominees; biographies of central figures in the organization; relevant supporting materials; press clippings or other publicity on the program; and follow-up data and summary results of the program to date. Mail nominations to: Apple PIE Awards, *Working Mother* magazine, 135 West 50th Street, New York, N.Y. 10020. Inquiries: Catherine Cartwright, 212-445-6143 or Kalia Doner, 212-580-0181, <Kalia@interport.net>.

- The 1997 Business and Education Conference entitled "Better Education is Everybody's Business" is co-sponsored by members of the Employers for Learning Steering Group of the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education and The Conference Board. The conference will take place in Boston, Mass. on May 15 and 16, 1997. Secretary Riley's keynote address will focus on the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education and the benefits for both the schools and businesses that get involved. For further information or to register, please contact the Conference Board's Customer Service Department via e-mail at <orders@conference-board.org>, phone at 212-339-0345 or fax at 212-980-7014. Special registration rates have been set for educators, representatives of nonprofits and team registrants.

- The National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education (NCPIE) <http://www.ncpie.org> and the MegaSkills Education Center <http://MegaSkillshsi.org> have launched home pages. We anticipate the Partnership's own home page will also be up shortly.

Principals Support President Clinton's Call to Action for American Education

U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley and the U.S. Department of Education have formed a partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) and the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) to answer President Clinton's Call to Action for American Education in the 21st century.

"The president's Call to Action can only support the action you take in your school community," Secretary Riley said in a recent speech to the National Association of Secondary School Principals in Orlando, Florida. At the Orlando meeting, over 100 principals pledged to go back to their school communities to work to achieve the President's Call to Action for better education.

President Clinton's Call to Action for American Education in the 21st century comprises ten common goals:

- Set rigorous national standards, with national tests in 4th-grade reading and 8th-grade math to make sure our children master the basics;
- Make sure there is a talented and dedicated teacher in every classroom;
- Help every student read independently and well by the end of 3rd-grade;
- Expand Head Start and challenge parents to get involved early on in their children's learning;
- Expand choice and accountability in public education;
- Make sure our schools are safe, disciplined and drug-free, and instill basic American values;
- Modernize school buildings and help support school construction;
- Open the doors of college to all who work hard and make the grade, and make the 13th and 14th years of education as universal as high school;
- Help adults improve their education and skills by transforming the tangle of federal training programs into a simple skill grant; and
- Connect every classroom and library to the Internet by the year 2000 and help all students become technologically literate.

Additional information pertaining to the president's Call to Action is available on the World Wide Web at <http://www.ed.gov/updates/PresEDPlan/>. A "Tool Kit" for principals who are interested in addressing the president's Call to Action is available by calling 1-800-USA-LEARN. CU

Congressional Hearings Begin on the 1998 Budget Request for Education

U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley testified at the first of a series of House hearings on President Clinton's fiscal year 1998 budget request for the U.S. Department of Education. President Clinton's 1998 balanced budget proposes the largest investment ever in improving schools and helping families pay for college.

President Clinton is proposing a significant investment of new mandatory programs in two key areas:

- **$200 million for the America Reads Challenge**, the first installment of a planned $1.75 billion over the next five years, which would help local schools and communities to hire some 25,000 reading specialists to help teach children who need extra assistance and, in turn, enlist and train one million tutors in the Reading Corps to help children learn to read well and independently by the end of third grade. The Reading Corps would work with teachers, families, libraries and community organizations by providing reading assistance after school, on weekends and during the summer.
- **$5 billion for school construction**, which would stimulate state and local efforts to upgrade and modernize school facilities, due to deterioration of facilities or increasing student enrollment, particularly in areas of high need. The program would pay for up to half the interest on school construction bonds or similar financing mechanisms, with a target of stimulating at least $20 billion in new construction or renovation projects.

Other significant initiatives to promote excellence in education include the America's Hope Scholarship tax credit and the Middle Class Bill of Rights tax deduction. America's Hope Scholarships would provide a $1,500 tax credit for up to two years of postsecondary education, and the tax deduction would permit a deduction of up to $10,000 from income for payment of college tuition and fees. Together, these proposals would save eligible students and their families more than $4 billion in college costs in 1998. In addition, under the budget proposal, savings from IRAs could be withdrawn penalty-free for payment of postsecondary education expenses.

The U.S. Department of Education's 1998 budget information and testimony is now available on the World Wide Web at >http://www.ed.gov/offices/OUS/budget.html/<. CU

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Arts Education Contributes to Early Childhood Brain Development

The early years of life are crucial to the development of vital connections within brain tissue which leads to later success in learning, researchers have found. Television star and movie director Rob Reiner is planning a prime time special for April 28 on the ABC network highlighting some of the current findings.

Other research that specifically links the study of music and other art forms to necessary brain development includes that of psychologist Frances Rauscher of the University of Wisconsin at Oshkosh and physicist Gordon Shaw of the University of California at Irvine. They demonstrated that preschoolers who were given keyboard lessons and did group singing scored higher on tests measuring spatial reasoning, a skill used later in math, science and engineering. Most recently, they found that the music lessons resulted in higher spatial reasoning scores than equivalent instruction in computer skills.

The Preschool Arts Enrichment Program of the Settlement Music School serves South Philadelphia children who live in a housing project across the street from the 87 year-old music school. A three year program evaluation revealed that children made gains in cognitive and language development above and beyond those evidenced in a control group of preschoolers without the arts-enriched curriculum. Working with a faculty of professional artists with training in early childhood education six to nine times a week, small groups of children visit the art studios to explore concepts that cut across the arts: pattern, change, repetition and extremes.

To reinforce preschool learning, children's parents or guardians are required to attend five hour-long parenting seminars each semester. The Settlement Music School also runs an arts in early childhood teacher training institute and an arts-focused after-school program, as well as a comprehensive community-based program.

The Wolf Trap Institute for Early Learning Through the Arts in Vienna, Virginia, teaches preschool children basic academic and life skills through participation in performing arts activities and trains their classroom teachers, through practical applications, to use the performing arts in education. Prior to the beginning of each seven week class residency, a Wolf Trap artist meets with a teacher to design a curriculum that addresses the needs of a particular group of children and the teacher. The Wolf Trap artist goes into the classroom twice a week for 45-minute sessions and leads performing arts-based activities that are designed around an academic or social theme.

Every three years, the Wold Trap Foundation hosts a national artists conference for the artists who work in 10 regional Wolf Trap programs across the country, and sponsors professional development workshops for teachers in local communities. Nationwide, sites include public schools, Head Start preschool programs and private child development centers.

Children naturally sing, dance, draw and role-play in an effort to understand the world around them and communicate their thoughts about it. A growing body of evidence demonstrates that when their caretakers engage them in these activities early in life on a regular basis, they are helping wire the children's brains for successful learning. CU

Community Update
By the Office of
Assistant
Secretary
Senior Director
Editor
Designer
BARBARA JULIUS

Community Update

No. 47, May 1997
U.S. Department of Education

The June issue of Community Update will highlight ways to prepare young children for school success.

Special Insert on Family Involvement
(See inside)

Make a Difference: Start a Summer Reading Program and Help Meet the America Reads Challenge

Reading is the basis of all learning, and the time adults spend reading with children helps build a solid foundation of reading skills. You can make a difference by helping support, start, or expand summer reading programs in your schools, neighborhoods or religious centers, businesses or local libraries.

U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley and more than 50 leaders of reading organizations affiliated with the 1997 Read*Write*Now! summer initiative are urging everyone to encourage children through 6th grade to accomplish the following:

- Read 30 minutes a day.
- Find a reading partner who will read with them two or three times a week.
- Learn a new vocabulary word a day.
- Get a library card and use it weekly.

Schools, libraries, youth groups, businesses, religious centers and neighborhood groups are using a variety of approaches and training to suit their communities. Many of these groups are using the Read*Write*Now! Kit, which can be obtained through local libraries, the U.S. Department of Education's home page at http://www.ed.gov/Family/ from which it can be copied, or by calling 1-800-USA-LEARN.

This summer's reading effort is a part of President Clinton's America Reads Challenge, which encourages all Americans to help teachers and parents improve the reading skills of the nation's children.

"We ought to commit ourselves as a country to say by the year 2000, 8-year-olds in America will be able to pick up an appropriate book and say, 'I read this all by myself,'" President Clinton said.

The America Reads Challenge legislation is part of the Fiscal Year 1998 budget request for the U.S. Department of Education, pending approval by Congress, and highlights reading as the most basic and essential academic skill and the cornerstone of academic achievement. President Clinton is proposing a significant investment for the America Reads Challenge. This investment would help local schools and communities hire 30,000 reading specialists and tutor coordinators, including 11,000 AmeriCorps members, to mobilize an army of one million tutors in the Reading Corps.

The Reading Corps would be utilized in a way that local teachers, families, libraries and community organizations feel best to provide individualized reading assistance after school and on weekends, ensuring that children can read well and independently by the end of the 3rd-grade. Currently, 40 percent of America's 4th-graders cannot read at the basic level on challenging national reading assessments.

Information about setting up summer and year-round reading programs will be featured on the U.S. Department of Education's satellite town meetings on May 20 and June 17, which will focus on reading and preparing young children for school success (see page 2). For more information on the proposed legislation for the America Reads Challenge, call 1-800-USA-LEARN. CU

Community Update *is available on the World Wide Web at <http://www.ed.gov/G2K/community>*

Coordinates for the May 20 Satellite Town Meeting

C-Band: *Galaxy 4; Orbital Location 99 degrees West; Transponder 9; Horizontal Polarity; Channel 9; Downlink Frequency 3880 MHZ; Audio Subcarriers 6.2 MHZ (Spanish) and 6.8 MHZ (English).*

Ku-Band: *Satellite SBS-6; Orbital Location 74 degrees West; Transponder 15; Horizontal Polarity; Channel 15; Downlink Frequency 12068 MHZ; Audio Subcarriers 6.2 MHZ (Spanish) and 6.8 MHZ (English).*

Entitled "Reading Together: Families, Schools and Communities," the hour-long Town Meeting will air on Tuesday, May 20 at 8:00 p.m. Eastern time. Call 1-800-USA-LEARN for further information or to register your participation.

June Town Meeting Will Focus on Preparing Young Children for School Success and Reading

The June Satellite Town Meeting will focus on early childhood development, its link to later reading skills and the importance of parental and community involvement in young children's education. Among the featured topics will be the importance of proper health and nutrition, parenting skills, and high-quality, early child care programs. Entitled "Ready to Learn: Preparing Young Children for School Success," the hour-long program will air on Tuesday, June 17 at 8:00 p.m. Eastern time.

The Department of Education produces the Satellite Town Meeting series in partnership with the National Alliance of Business and the Center for Workforce Preparation, with support from the Bayer Foundation, the Proctor and Gamble Fund, Microsoft Inc., and SC Johnson Wax. Broadcast and cable partners include Discovery Communications, the Public Broadcasting System, and Channel One. The program will be closed-captioned and simulcast in Spanish.

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To participate in the Satellite Town Meeting, ask your local Public Broadcasting System (PBS) member station or Chamber of Commerce if your group can use the facility as a downlink site. Call 1-800-USA-LEARN for further information or to register your participation. CU

Public School Choice Is Expanding, Town Meeting Audience Learns

"Public School Choice," was the topic of the Satellite Town Meeting that aired on Tuesday, April 15 in Washington, D.C. Hosted by U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley and Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education Gerald Tirozzi, the teleconference focused on quality choices in public education.

The program featured Michael J. Fox, director of the Museum of Northern Arizona, Ginger Hovenic, director of the Clear View Elementary Charter School, Mary Lou McGrath, superintendent of Cambridge Public Schools, and Deborah Taliaferro, a parent and co-president of the Bradford Academy PTA. John Anderson, president of New American Schools, was also featured.

Schools and communities were encouraged to keep the following points in mind:

- Make sure schools of choice are **public** schools that are open to all students regardless of background or ability;
- Focus on quality teaching and learning and challenging academic standards;
- Ensure the schools are accountable to the public for academic results and for managing finances responsibly;
- Provide plenty of information to ensure that students and families are aware of the choices available to them;
- Involve the community, parents and educators in developing strategies to promote equity, including such steps as transportation and parent information centers; and
- Use public school choice to strengthen public education and improve all public schools.

To obtain more information about public school choice, call 1-800-USA-LEARN or access the World Wide Web at http://www.uscharterschools.org/. CU

Partnership for Family Involvement in Education

Telephone Pioneers of America Support Reading Across the Nation

The Telephone Pioneers of America, a service organization of retired and current telecommunications workers, provides valuable reading assistance to schools and communities through its local chapters. The commitment of the 850,000 Telephone Pioneers to local service represents a powerful force in making a meaningful difference for the nation's children. Although reading activities are only part of their many volunteer and service efforts, the organization is dedicated to ensuring that every child learns to read and develops a love of reading for a lifetime.

Several Pioneer chapters distribute "Read to Me" kits which are delivered by local Pioneers to new parents in their community. The kit consists of materials such as a new Mother Goose book, a pamphlet on reading aloud to children, hot-line information on adult literacy, and information about local libraries and schools.

Other chapters distribute "Chip," a reading buddy doll that can be used by teachers and librarians as a reading incentive for young elementary school children. It can also be used as a reading achievement award. A "Teach Me" book is designed to assist children with manual dexterity and organizational skills. Another similar learning device is the "Learning Apron" which can be used by teachers and librarians to help younger children develop basic and small motor skills.

Some Telephone Pioneers do more than provide learning materials -- they also provide one-on-one mentoring and performances for classes of elementary school children. One example is the Pioneer Clown Troupe, which performs stories for children and encourages them to explore the world of books. A clown doll is left behind as a remembrance of the performance.

The Telephone Pioneers of America have committed 850,000 members to provide valuable reading assistance to our nation's children.

With corporate support from Bell South and Southwestern Bell, the Telephone Pioneers of America have also copublished the U.S. Department of Education's Read*Write*Now! materials for distribution as part of the Pioneer Library located in employee cafeterias. Other Pioneer-sponsoring telecommunications companies are considering this copublishing arrangement for the future.

Those interested in learning more about the activities of the Telephone Pioneers of America can call the Pioneers Resource Center at 1-800-976-1914, or visit their web site at www.telephone-pioneers.org.

Partnership Update

Launched by Secretary Riley in 1994, the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education is currently organized around four "area" steering groups: Family/School, Community Organizations, Employers for Learning, and Religious Groups. Additionally, a National Steering Group comprises representatives of each of the four "area" steering groups. These steering groups are all working on plans that will strengthen the Partnership's grassroots efforts, particularly the Read*Write*Now! summer initiative which is part of the America Reads Challenge; and the America Goes Back to School initiative which encourages communities and individuals to rally around local schools in support of all children learning to high standards. Recent activities include:

- The Partnership's **National Steering Group** recently met to discuss ways of strengthening local efforts that support family involvement in education throughout the year. Participants pledged to get involved by linking their organizations with the Partnership's two lead efforts, the Read*Write*Now! summer initiative and the America Goes Back to School initiative in the fall. A third effort is being developed for the winter and spring around mentoring in math and encouraging all students to think about college beginning in the middle grades.
- The **Employers for Learning Steering Group** has completed plans for a national conference on business-education partnerships on May 15-16 in Boston. The conference, entitled "Better Education Is Everybody's Business," is cosponsored by the Conference Board. We wish to extend a warm welcome to those attending the conference. Special incentive rates for educators and nonprofits are available.
- The **Family/School Steering Group** is working on a teleconference around educator preparation for family involvement in education. The teleconference, which is scheduled for October 1997, will feature good examples of what teachers, parents, administrators, school boards, and postsecondary institutions can do to support family involvement in education.
- The **Community Organizations** are developing grassroots efforts and a key publication on extending learning beyond the school day.
- The **Religious Groups** are taking a leadership role in a nationwide effort to support mentoring around literacy through the America Reads Challenge.

For more information about the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education, call 1-800-USA-LEARN or visit the U.S. Department of Education's web site at http://www.ed.gov/Family/. CU

Calendar

May 15-16 *The Business and Education Conference "Better Education Is Everybody's Business" in Boston, Massachusetts. For information, contact The Conference Board by phone at (212) 339-0345, via fax at (212) 980-7014, or E-mail at orders@conference-board.org.*

June 12-14 *Fourth Annual Conference on Character Building. For information, contact Michael Bocian, The Communitarian Network, 2130 H Street, N.W., Suite 714J, Washington, D.C. 20052.*

October 21 *Satellite Town Meeting on family involvement in education. Call 1-800-USA-LEARN to indicate interest in sponsoring a downlink site.*

October 23-25 *National Parents Day Coalition Conference "Strengthening Families--Building Communities: Partnerships for a SMART (Strong, Motivated, Active, Responsible, Tolerant) America. For registration information, call (202) 530-0849.*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The 1997 Read*Write*Now! Kit is scheduled for release in early May. Families can request one regular kit, and community-based tutoring programs working with many children can request one camera-ready kit by calling 1-800-USA-LEARN.
- The 1997 America Goes Back to School initiative is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education and education, employer, religious, and community group members of the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education. The initiative encourages parents, grandparents, community leaders, employers and employees, members of the arts community, religious leaders, and every caring adult to become more actively involved in improving education in their communities. This exciting and important annual effort focuses attention on improving education across America during the back-to-school time of August through October. For more information, call 1-800-USA-LEARN. CU

Attracting and Preparing Teachers for the 21st Century

Editor's note: *On April 17-18, U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley was the host of a national forum entitled "Attracting and Preparing Teachers for the 21st Century" in Washington, D.C. The forum included the 1997 Teachers of the Year, as well as university and teacher education leaders for a candid discussion about how the profession can attract, prepare and support the many new teachers who will be entering this demanding field in the years ahead. Below is an excerpt from Secretary Riley's speech. You are invited to contribute to this discussion by visiting the U.S. Department of Education's web site at http://www.ed.gov/comments/nationalforum/. The entire speech is also available online at http://www.ed.gov/Speeches/04-1997/970417.html.*

I want to welcome all of you to this national forum....We have over fifty of the best teachers in America attending this forum, as well as college and university presidents and deans from 24 states.

I'm pleased that all of you are joining us -- for this really is a national dialogue of great importance to the future of our country. How we teach our children defines in many ways the future of America in this new Information Age.

The entire context of American education is changing. We need teachers skilled in using computers as a powerful teaching tool, and many more teachers well versed in teaching English as a second language. Our teachers need to teach to a higher level of achievement, and be prepared to teach all of America's children -- the gifted and talented, our many new immigrants, the college-bound achiever, and the disabled child who is learning so much more because he or she is now included.

Yet, we struggle to put the old industrial model of education behind us. The jewel of American education is our system of higher education, yet too often our colleges of education are treated like forgotten stepchildren. And for too long, public education in America and higher education have gone their separate ways, each dedicated to its own vision of excellence and learning.

I believe that this 19th century model is outdated. We need a new model appropriate for the 21st century, an ongoing dialogue at every level of education to raise expectations and achieve high standards. This is one of the chief purposes of this national forum -- to break down the disconnections -- to get good people at every level of education talking to one another.

We asked our state teachers of the year to answer eleven questions on teacher preparation with a special focus on the new teachers they have mentored or are mentoring now. The first thing they told us is that the new teachers they are mentoring know the content of their subjects. They also told us that these first-year teachers have good mechanics -- they know how to give tests, they are well prepared when it comes to planning daily lessons, to directing classroom activities and monitoring student progress. This is all very positive.

But the teachers also voiced some common concerns. They were overwhelming in their view that new teachers are unprepared to manage classroom discipline. The teachers also expressed very strong concerns that new teachers are not prepared to use technology and they have some difficulty engaging parents in the learning process.

The teachers also noted that new teachers really are not given adequate time for student teaching -- and all too often new teachers are on their own during the first two years of teaching. We haven't created a process that gives future teachers a true sense of the American classroom here in 1997 -- and then we leave them to fend for themselves.

Teaching is a demanding profession, and it will be even more demanding in the future. This is why I want to encourage every teacher in America to think about following in the footsteps of Sharon Draper -- our new National Teacher of the Year -- who chose to become board certified.

President Clinton and I strongly support that National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and its goal of certifying 100,000 master teachers in the next decade. I challenge every school in the nation to have at least one board-certified teacher on your faculty.

This is my charge to all of you -- use this dialogue not as an end, but as a beginning -- become serious and committed advocates for change. Do the hard work of upgrading teacher preparation and certification in your state.

The American people are tuned in to education. The sparks are all around us. And we have a president in the White House -- in Bill Clinton -- who cares deeply about education. If ever there was a time to come together to improve teaching it is now. CU

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FIRST CLASS

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White House Conference Highlights Scientific Research on Early Childhood Development

The President and Mrs. Clinton were the hosts of the White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning, a one-day conference held on April 17. The conference included scientists and child development specialists from around the country and showcased a growing body of research about how children develop from the earliest days. The conference was broadcast via satellite to over 90 sites across the nation.

"This unique conference is a part of our constant effort to give our children the opportunity to make the most of their God-given potential and to help their parents lead the way, and to remind everyone in America that this must always be part of the public's business because we all have a common interest in our children's future," President Clinton said in his opening remarks.

New scientific research suggests that experiences after birth, particularly in the first three years of life, have a dramatic impact on brain development. This means that nurturing, talking to, singing to and reading to our youngest children will improve their ability to learn and develop throughout their lives. Conference participants called for high-quality day care, parenting education and expanded health coverage for children.

Conference participants included: Dr. David Hamburg, president of the Carnegie Corporation of New York; Dr. Donald Cohen, Yale University; Dr. Carla Shatz, University of California at Berkeley; Dr. Patricia Kuhl, University of Washington; Dr. Ezra Davidson, Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science; Dr. T. Berry Brazelton, Harvard University; Dr. Deborah Phillips, Institute of Medicine; Dr. Gloria Rodriguez, Advance Family Support Program; Harriet Meyer, Ounce of Prevention; Melvin Wearing, Chief of Police in New Haven, Connecticut; Arnold Langbo, The Kellogg Company; and Rob Reiner, CastleRock Entertainment.

In his opening remarks, President Clinton cited the importance of Head Start programs for younger children and an expanded Family and Medical Leave Act. He applauded the U.S. Department of Education's "Ready, Set, Read" tool kit, which can be helpful to day care providers and parents in developing the early reading skills of children ages 0 to 5. He enlisted the U.S. Department of Defense, whose day care centers have been cited as models, to enter partnerships that would help improve the quality of child care centers in the private sector, and announced a new initiative from the U.S. Department of Justice entitled "Safe Start," which is designed to train law enforcement officials in child development so they will be equipped to handle situations involving young children.

The White House is planning to host a second conference devoted exclusively to child care issues this fall. The "Ready, Set, Read" tool kit will be on the internet and then can be duplicated. A limited supply of the kit is available by calling 1-800-USA-LEARN. Additional information pertaining to conference is available on the world wide web at http://www.whitehouse.gov/WH/New/ECDC/.

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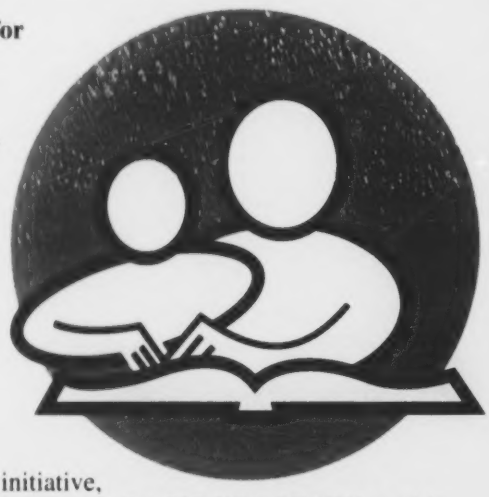
Community Update

No. 48, June 1997
U.S. Department of Education

Get Involved! Volunteerism and Community Service Can Help Improve Education

This summer, individuals and groups across the nation are volunteering their time to work together with families, students and teachers to help children continue to learn over the summer and improve the quality of education for children within their communities. Here are five examples of ways you can make a difference:

- **Supporting and Encouraging Parent Involvement**: Leadership of the Mount Vernon High School PTA in Alexandria, Virginia, increased attendance at monthly PTA meetings by working with school administration and the community. Together, they succeeded in enlisting 100 percent of the teachers, and improved student and parent involvement at the school. For more information, call The National PTA at (312) 670-6782 and ask for member services.
- **Helping Children Learn to Read**: In Washington, D.C., churches of The United Methodist Church are adopting local schools and using the Read*Write*Now! summer tutoring program which is part of President Clinton's America Reads Challenge. Methodist churches in the Baltimore area are providing volunteers for the Baltimore Reads Challenge pilot project. For more information, call Marcus Matthews or Sandy Ferguson at 1-800-492-2525.
- **After-School Programs to Promote Learning and Safety**: The National Community Education Association (NCEA) is working with schools to develop on-site programs that extend learning after school and during the summer months. In West Philadelphia, students from the University of Pennsylvania serve as mentors to elementary school students around literacy, environment and community studies, conflict resolution and technology. For more information, call Starla Jewell-Kelly at (703) 359-8973.
- **Math and Science Mentors to Help Prepare Students for College**: ASPIRA Association, Inc. offers a year-round mentoring program for mathematics and science in four cities to support the development of Puerto Rican and Latino middle school students. ASPIRA also offers other volunteer opportunities in education and public policy. For more information or to become a mentor, call Al Staropoli at (202) 835-3600, extension 137.
- **Service Learning Opportunities for Students**: Last summer, the Girl Scouts in Kansas City, Missouri, volunteered their time to work with younger students using the Read*Write*Now! tutoring program. Over 1,600 students benefited from this program in 1996. For more information, call Sheila Lewis at (212) 852-8076.



For more information on the Read*Write*Now! summer initiative, the America Reads Challenge, and family involvement in education, call 1-800-USA-LEARN or visit the U.S. Department of Education's family involvement web site at http://www.ed.gov/Family/. CU

Special Insert on Family Involvement
(See inside)

Community Update *is available on the World Wide Web at http://www.ed.gov/G2K/community.*

Coordinates for the June 17 Satellite Town Meeting

C-Band: *Galaxy 4; Orbital Location 99 degrees West; Transponder 9; Horizontal Polarity; Channel 9; Downlink Frequency 3880 MHZ; Audio Subcarriers 6.2 MHZ (Spanish) and 6.8 MHZ (English).*

Ku-Band: *Satellite SBS-6; Orbital Location 74 degrees West; Transponder 15; Horizontal Polarity; Channel 15; Downlink Frequency 12068 MHZ; Audio Subcarriers 6.2 MHZ (Spanish) and 6.8 MHZ (English).*

Entitled "Ready to Learn: Preparing Young Children for School Success," the hour-long Town Meeting will air on Tuesday, June 17 at 8:00 p.m. Eastern time. Call 1-800-USA-LEARN for further information or to register your participation.

Summer Reading Is Crucial, Town Meeting Audience Learns

The May Satellite Town Meeting "Reading Together: Families, Schools and Communities" aired on Tuesday, May 20 to a live audience at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. Hosted by U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley and Director of the America Reads Challenge Carol H. Rasco, the teleconference linked over 700 family and school groups across the country. The program explored ways that schools, libraries, and business, community and religious groups can support the America Reads Challenge and the Read*Write*Now! initiative by encouraging children to read during the summer months.

"Students who read regularly during the summer months do not experience the same summer reading loss as students who do not keep up their reading skills," Secretary Riley said.

The program featured Jack Batty, executive director of the GE Elfun, Betty Breedlove, director of the Title I supplementary programs for the Kansas City, Missouri School District, Sandy Cahn, director of education and enrichment for the Teamworks summer reading program, Peter Jensen, an extension agent for Morgan County, West Virginia, and Mary Somerville, director of the Miami-Dade Library System and president of the American Library Association.

Students were encouraged to accomplish the following during the summer:

- Read 30 minutes a day;
- Find a reading partner who will read with them two or three times a week;
- Learn a new vocabulary word a day; and
- Get a library card and use it weekly.

For more information on the America Reads Challenge or the Read*Write*Now! summer initiative, call 1-800-USA-LEARN. CU

FCC Approves Telecommunication Discounts for Schools and Libraries

The Telecommunications Act of 1996 directs the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to ensure affordable access discounts for advanced telecommunication services for schools and libraries. On May 7, the FCC issued its unanimous order on implementing "universal service" for schools and libraries (education rate). The ruling makes up to $2.25 billion dollars in discounts in telecommunication services available to schools and libraries. This means that public and non-profit private schools in the nation will be eligible for discounts for telecommunication services.

Discounts ranging from 20 to 90 percent based on a sliding scale formula will be beneficial to all in the education community. For example, rural and urban schools that have high rates of poverty will be eligible for discounts of 80 to 90 percent. The average discount for all schools will be 60 percent.

The discounts will cover all commercially available telecommunication services. This includes services and equipment, including Internet access (dial-up, direct access and E-mail), internal connections necessary for bringing technology into the classroom, (routers, network file servers), and other devices for establishing networks. To provide flexibility for schools and libraries, universal service support makes all commercially available telecommunication services eligible for discounts, including telephone lines, coaxial cable, fiber optics, as well as cellular and satellite communications.

On January 1, 1998, the universal service fund for schools and libraries will become available and begin to reimburse providers for services rendered. For more information, contact the FCC at (888) CALL-FCC, or visit the World Wide Web site at http://www.ed.gov/PressReleases/05-1997/erate.html. CU

Special June 1997 Insert on Family Involvement

Partnership for Family Involvement in Education

Religious Leaders Pledge to Support the America Reads Challenge

On May 7, 40 leaders from religious organizations met with Secretary Riley and his staff to discuss the role of faith communities in helping to ensure that all children learn to read well and independently by the end of the 3rd grade. Religious leaders were challenged to make a 5-year commitment to the America Reads Challenge by recruiting 250,000 volunteers from communities of faith for the reading effort. The reading tutors would work directly with children in their local communities, concentrating on the years of preschool through the end of 3rd grade.

Some religious organizations have already begun the work of recruiting volunteers and establishing literacy programs. The Literacy Initiative of Amos: The National Jewish Partnership for Social Justice of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations plans to mobilize 100,000 volunteers to help meet the America Reads Challenge. A large number of national Jewish organizations have enthusiastically endorsed the program and are committed to encouraging their members to participate.

Last year, The United Methodist Church published *Education: A Gift of Hope* and is following up this publication with a study guide for local churches to use to support education in their communities. Additionally, the church has begun the Holy Boldness Task Force which helps local churches form education guilds. The guilds in the Washington, D.C. churches will be using the Read*Write*Now! material for their center-based programs. Similarly, the Presbyterian Church (USA) has declared 1998 "The Year of Education" and is planning activities and publications that will support local churches in their education efforts, including reading and tutoring.

Leaders from religious organizations met with Secretary Riley to support the America Reads Challenge.

The Progressive National Baptist Convention is making the America Reads Challenge a centerpiece of its August convention which will attract 15,000 delegates. The African Methodist Episcopal Church in Georgia is already beginning its reading effort with a particular emphasis on the rural areas of Georgia. The Christian Brothers Conference is working to make the America Reads Challenge an integral part of its high school service program and its campus ministry volunteer initiatives.

For more information on the America Reads Challenge and the Read*Write*Now! summer initiative, call 1-800-USA-LEARN.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Secretary Riley, Maryland Governor Parris N. Glendening and State Superintendent of Schools Nancy S. Grasmick celebrate Maryland's sign-on to the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education at Eastern Technical High School in Baltimore County.

Calendar

June 12-14 - *Fourth Annual Conference on Character Building. For information, contact Michael Bocian, The Communitarian Network, 2130 H Street, N.W., Suite 714J, Washington, D.C. 20052.*

October 21- *Satellite Town Meeting on educator preparation for family involvement in education. Call 1-800-USA-LEARN to register your downlink site.*

October 23-25 - *National Parents Day Coalition Conference. "Strengthening Families - Building Communities." Partnerships for a SMART (Strong, Motivated, Active, Responsible, Tolerant) America. For registration information, call (202) 530-0849.*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- On May 5, Maryland became the first state in the nation to formally endorse and join the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education and President Clinton's Call to Action for American Education. The Maryland partnership initiatives include a joint AT&T Family Education Network plan for a statewide web site network, and the donation of recycled computers by federal agencies with offices in Maryland. For more information, write to Darla Strouse, Director of Partnerships, Maryland State Department of Education, 200 West Baltimore Street, Baltimore, Maryland 20201.
- The new edition of *Employers, Families, and Education* is now available with examples of what employers can do to support family involvement in education. Call 1-800-USA-LEARN to request a copy.
- Winner of the 1997 Edpress Award for "Best Sponsored Publication," *Parent Power* is published for Ashland, Inc. by the Family Education Network, a member of the Partnership's Employers for Learning Steering Group. The 8-page newsletter is available free of charge via the Internet at www.ashland.com/education/.
- *Getting Smart: The Secret Is Out* is a new magazine for parents from the Efficacy Institute. To order, write to The Efficacy Institute, Inc., 128 Spring Street, Lexington, Massachusetts 02173. The cost is $3.00 per single copy, plus $1.25 postage and handling. Fax purchase orders only to (617) 862-2580. For discounts on bulk orders, call (617) 862-4390, extension 531. CU

Members of the Partnership's Employers for Learning Steering Group pose with Secretary Riley at the Business Education Conference in Boston. The steering group was recognized for sponsoring the conference.

Parents Are Their Children's First Teachers

Those of us who have experienced watching a newborn desperately trying to focus its blurry eyes on our faces as we coo at them, mimic us with their little mouths, or follow our hand movements with their eyes and hands can hardly express our amazement and wonder. What we are seeing is a newborn learning and developing language skills, motor functions and sensory abilities.

In April of this year, the White House held a conference on early childhood development and learning at which research that addressed the earliest years of life and the influence that stimulation and nurturing have on babies and young children was presented. The findings in this research explain how the brain develops, and now enable us to "see" differences in the brains of babies and young children who are stimulated and those who are not. In the brain, neurons, synapses and pathways (essentially the brain's "wiring") develop differently, depending upon the amount of stimulation a baby and young child receives and its appropriateness.

Infants and toddlers explore their new worlds through their parents. The role parents play in communicating with their children and providing a home, food and clothing to children is fundamental. Now it is also understood that nurturing and stimulation help children to develop fully and become better prepared to learn. Equally important for the 60 percent of children ages birth to three, who are cared for on a regular basis by someone other than their parents, is the quality of the child care they receive while their parents are working.

A recent national poll has shown that parents know they have an important influence on their children's development, but they do not fully understand how their day-to-day interactions with their babies and toddlers affect early childhood learning and development. This is particularly true for younger and lower-income parents, as well as parents of a child with a disability, health problems, or with a developmental delay.

Since 1986, the U.S. Department of Education has supported programs to provide parents of children with disabilities the information and support they need. The Early Intervention Program for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities, now a part of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, provides informational support for families with young children with disabilities. Frequently referred to as "Part H", this voluntary program assists states and local schools with designing and providing family-centered, responsive, collaborative and culturally appropriate high-quality services.

What does the new research mean for parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles? All of us, whether parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles or friends, can play a major role in the lives of children. More time needs to be spent reading to children from the earliest age. And adults need to think back to their own childhood and replicate the things that they liked--games, singing together, visits to museums and zoos, storytelling, and time spent with parents and other family members. They need to make the time to provide unhurried and responsive care in safe and supportive environments the children need. And all of us need to reach out and support families by providing an occasional evening out by baby-sitting; listening to parents who need to talk because of the stress they may be under; giving advice when asked; and by volunteering in child care centers and schools.

What does the new research mean for schools, early childhood providers and other educators? Many schools are reaching out to parents of school age children and parents of younger children. These proactive schools are sharing information through programs--such as Parents as Teachers-- and are providing the support and training that parents need. Other schools are setting up early childhood programs with a strong parent involvement component. These schools provide on-site child care or co-locate preschools or Head Start programs on their school campuses. They provide parenting classes and health services so that busy families can get the support they need right in their neighborhood.

What does this important research mean for communities? In many communities, there is a gap between what children from birth to age three need and what they are provided. That gap can be bridged by all sectors of a community--public, private and voluntary. And it must be addressed at all levels—local, state and national. More communities can begin building family-centered support systems, affordable and accessible health care, and quality child care for all families. Through collaborative and focused efforts, communities can begin to understand that family support systems are every bit as important to a community's infrastructure as its roads and bridges. cu

The role parents play in communicating with their children and providing a home, food and clothing to children is fundamental.

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FIRST CLASS

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Community Update

Libraries Are an Ally for Summer Reading

Reading is the most basic academic skill and the cornerstone of academic achievement. But learning to read doesn't happen in the classroom alone, and the best readers are introduced to books and reading long before they enter school. Help is as close as your nearest library.

Across the country, libraries offer a wealth of books, computers and other resources that can help give every child a head start on life and learning. Parents, grandparents and other caring adults can make sure that children connect with a library early and often to keep up their reading skills this summer. Schools and parent, youth, business and community groups can form partnerships with local libraries to help combat the loss of reading skills over the summer.

In Florida, the Miami-Dade Public Library System is sponsoring a reading initiative entitled "Blast Off Into Reading" that encourages students 18 or under and their families to read during summer vacation. Under the directorship of Mary R. Somerville, who also serves as the president of the American Library Association, the Dade County Public Schools have joined the library in its reading effort. Children who read 10 books this summer as part of the reading initiative will receive prizes for their efforts.

The Miami-Dade Library is also implementing a pilot reading program that teams children from the 1st and 2nd grades up with middle school tutors. In partnership with the Dade County Public Schools Title I Programs, reading partners will meet once a week with participating children to tutor and provide extra help in reading and writing. In return, the children will agree to read and write just 30 minutes a day, five days a week during the summer months and obtain a library card. The effort is part of the U.S. Department of Education's Read*Write*Now! summer initiative to improve the reading and writing skills of America's children through the work of volunteers. The library system has secured teen volunteers from Dade County Public Schools, the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce and the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts.

The American Library Association has a few tips on ways you can support your child's education:

- Visit your public or school library and make sure there is a qualified librarian to work with students and the books and resources are up to date.
- Get to know your public or school library media specialist.
- Join the Friends of the Library, a support group of volunteers who provide fundraising and other assistance. If there is no group, offer to start one.
- Enroll your preschool child in story hours and other programs at the public library, and make sure your child has a library card and knows how to use it.
- Be a role model. Let your child see you reading at home and help your child explore new technology.

Call 1-800-545-2433 for more information on the American Library Association. Read*Write*Now! kits can help family, community, youth and education groups start and expand summer reading programs. The kits can be obtained through local libraries, the U.S. Department of Education's home page at http://www.ed.gov/Family/ from which it can be copied, or by calling 1-800-USA-LEARN. EU

Store for RIE?

Community Update

No. 49, July/August 1997
U.S. Department of Education

Help Lead the America Goes Back to School Effort

U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley and the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education invite you to play a leading role in the *America Goes Back to School* initiative, an annual effort that focuses attention on improving education across the nation, especially during the back-to-school period of August through October.

"The *America Goes Back to School* initiative is one of our important annual efforts to highlight the great need for family, business and community involvement in education," Secretary Riley said.

AMERICA GOES BACK TO SCHOOL

This year's back-to-school initiative challenges families, educators, business and community leaders to make a commitment to year-round involvement in children's learning. Secretary Riley will be joined in this effort by parents, educators and members of the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education.

The *America Goes Back to School* initiative challenges all Americans to get involved in concrete ways such as:

- Spending time reading to and with a child so he or she can read well by the end of third-grade.
- Educating students to prevent substance abuse and expanding after-school programs for elementary and middle-school students.
- Recruiting and organizing tutors for help after-school, weekends and during the summer.
- Coaching a child in math so he or she is motivated and prepared to take algebra by the eighth-grade.
- Sponsoring a career day and offering work-study, school-to-work, and internship opportunities for middle and high school students.
- Planning a series of events that connect middle and high school students and their parents with colleges, and learning about options for paying for college.
- Volunteering time to assist teachers and supporting good teaching.
- Helping to bring technology into classrooms and preparing teachers and students to use this technology well.
- Learning more about how your school, school district, and state can sign-up to take the 1999 national tests in fourth-grade reading and eighth-grade math to make sure students are mastering the basics.

Last year, thousands of families, schools, employers and community groups participated in the back-to-school initiative across the nation. In Macomb, Michigan, fifth-grade teacher Frank Miracola and his principal, Kathy Markel, organized a back-to-school barbeque for teachers, parents, and other community members to set a positive tone for the new school year. And in Bennington, Vermont, Hemmings Motor News allowed all of its employees to take two paid "Education Participation Days" to volunteer with an academic program of any local school.

For a free copy of the *America Goes Back to School* kit or for more information regarding the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education, call 1-800-USA-LEARN, or visit the U.S. Department of Education's Web site at http://www.ed.gov/Family/agbts. CU

Special Insert on Family Involvement
(See inside)

Community Update *is available on the World Wide Web at <http://www.ed.gov/G2K/community>*

Parents Are Their Children's First Teachers, June Town Meeting Audience Learns

The June Satellite Town Meeting, "Ready to Learn: Preparing Young Children for School Success," aired on Tuesday June 17, before a live audience in Washington, D.C. Hosted by U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley and Director of the America Reads Challenge Carol H. Rasco, the teleconference was the last town meeting of the 1996-97 school year.

The program focused on early childhood development, its link to later reading skills and the importance of parental and community involvement in young children's education. The program also highlighted the latest research on brain development and stressed the important role of the parent as a child's first and most important teacher.

"We know now—more than ever—that the first few years of life are absolutely critical to a child's development," Secretary Riley said.

The program featured Joanna Bogin, co-director of the Sunrise Children's Center; Marisa Chapa, a research assistant from AVANCE; Cheryl Clark, a teacher at Bowling Park Elementary School; Chris Kjeldsen, vice president of community and workplace programs for Johnson & Johnson; and Dr. Wayne Yankus, a pediatrician and president of the New Jersey chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. The program also showcased the Ready*Set*Read tool kit, which is designed for parents and care givers of children from birth through age five.

Panelists encouraged parents and families to:

- Read with their children, starting at the earliest years.
- Take advantage of the many learning opportunities in their community, and visit libraries, museums and zoos.
- Check out parent education classes in their local school, church or community groups.
- Make sure children visit a pediatrician regularly.

Schools, early child care providers, employers, educators and communities were encouraged to:

- Provide opportunities for parent education and reach out to parents of young children.
- Support quality child care programs and preschools.
- Make health and nutrition services accessible to families who need them.

For more information on the Ready*Set*Read tool kit, call 1-800-USA-LEARN. The tool kit is also available online at http://www.ed.gov/inits/americareads/RSRkit.html. CU

1997-98 Satellite Town Meeting Series Will Focus on Improving American Education

The U.S. Department of Education's 1997-98 Satellite Town Meeting series will showcase good examples, model programs, best practices and innovative ideas that parents, educators and communities across the nation have used to improve their schools. On the third Tuesday of each month during the school year, U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley will host a discussion where local leaders from education, business, and civic life, as well as involved parents and community activists, share their success stories with the satellite audience.

Here's a brief look at the 1997-98 Satellite Town Meeting series:

- **"Back to School: Families and Communities Together for Learning"** September 16, 1997, 8:00-9:00 p.m. Eastern time.
- **"Preparing Classrooms for the Future: Ensuring Access to the Internet"** October 21, 1997, 8:00-9:00 p.m. Eastern time.
- **"Supporting Quality Teachers: A Talented Teacher in Every Classroom"** November 18, 1997, 8:00-9:00 p.m. Eastern time.
- **"Serving Students with Disabilities: What Families, Schools and Communities Need to Know"** January 20, 1998, 8:00-9:00 p.m. Eastern time.
- **"Raising Student Achievement: Schools, Communities and Challenging Standards"** February 17, 1998, 8:00-9:00 p.m. Eastern time.
- **"Think College Early: Preparing Academically and Financially"** March 17, 1998, 8:00-9:00 p.m. Eastern time.
- **"Making Math Count: World-Class Achievement Starting with Algebra"** April 21, 1998, 8:00-9:00 p.m. Eastern time.
- **"Reading Partners: Teaming Up to Help Children Read Well"** May 19, 1998, 8:00-9:00 p.m. Eastern time.
- **"Creating a Safe, Disciplined and Drug-Free School: Turning Research into Practice"** June 16, 1998, 8:00-9:00 p.m. Eastern time.

The U.S. Department of Education produces the Satellite Town Meeting in partnership with the National Alliance of Business and the Center for Workforce Preparation. Related material is available from the U.S. Department of Education, including a "Just Add Water" kit to help you to use the national broadcast of the Satellite Town Meeting to create a local event in your community. Call 1-800-USA-LEARN for further information or to register your participation. CU

Special July/August Insert on Family Involvement

Partnership for Family Involvement in Education

The Big Help-a-thon

So often the focus of our work with children is what we do *for* them. Too often we do not take the time to challenge children to see themselves as resources with the power to affect the world in which they live. On October 19, during the America Goes Back to School period, the children's cable channel, Nickelodeon, will sponsor an event which seeks to change this: the Big Help-a-thon. Nickelodeon's Big Help-a-thon is a full day of special programming live from Los Angeles, California, where sponsors provide activities and ideas for children to get involved in helping others. For the third year, the U.S. Department of Education will join the National PTA, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Youth Serve America, and the Girl Scouts of the USA in encouraging young people to get involved in helping others.

The focus of the U.S. Department of Education's involvement will be the America Reads Challenge: Read*Write*Now! effort. Programming on the day of the Big Help-a-thon and special "Big Helpers in Action" spots throughout the summer and fall will demonstrate how children can use their reading abilities to help others by reading to younger children and to seniors and others who are home bound.

The U.S. Department of Education's past activities at the Big Help-a-thon have featured designing book marks to be given out by the Los Angeles Public Library, story time sponsored by Rolling Readers of San Diego, and book donations in cooperation with the National PTA. This year, all children attending the Big Help-a-thon, as well as the vast listening audience, will be encouraged to read 30 minutes a day, be a reading partner, learn a new vocabulary word each day, and obtain and use a library card.

Photographer: Ethan Zindler

Nickelodeon's Big Help-a-thon challenges children to see themselves as resources with the power to affect the world in which they live.

In an effort to reach teachers and students across the country, Nickelodeon is distributing Big Help-a-thon classroom kits to middle school classrooms which focus on building volunteerism. Last year, 8.5 million "Big Helpers" called to pledge over 92 million hours of help. To be a part of the Big Help-a-thon, call (212) 258-7080, or write to The Big Help, P.O. Box 929, New York, New York 10108.

Partnership Co-sponsors National Family Involvement Survey

At the Family Reunion VI this past June, Vice President Gore released preliminary results from a few items of a new study focusing on family involvement in education entitled "The Study of Opportunities for and Barriers to Family Involvement in Education." The Partnership for Family Involvement in Education, the GTE Foundation, and the U.S. Department of Education co-sponsored the survey, which asked parents of elementary and middle school students to report on the extent of their involvement in their children's education. Preliminary results of this study, conducted by the National Opinion Research Center at The University of Chicago, show that:

- Most parents think school administrators and teachers see them as important partners in helping their children to learn. However, fewer than half of all parents had been formally asked by school officials to become more involved in their children's education.
- Some schools seek to engage parents as partners in their children's learning by signing learning agreements.
- New technologies are not widespread as tools schools use to communicate with parents.
- Parents expressed a strong desire for after-school programs and wanted information on how to prepare their children for college.

Watch future issues *Community Update* for information on how to order the final report. CU

Vice President Gore poses with National PTA President Lois Jean White (r) and National PTA Education Program Manager Dreama Love (l). The National PTA is a member of the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education.

Calendar

July 27 - *Observance of National Parents Day. For information, call (202) 530-0849.*

October 16-18 - *U.S. Department of Education's Regional Conference on Improving America's Schools. San Diego, California. For information, call 1-800-203-5494.*

October 19 - *The Big Help-a-thon, sponsored by Nickelodeon, Los Angeles, California. For information, call (212) 258-7080.*

October 23-26 - *National Parents Day Coalition Annual Conference, Satellite Broadcast and Awards Ceremony. Washington, D.C.*

November 16-18 - *U.S. Department of Education's Regional Conference on Improving America's Schools. Dallas, Texas.*

November 18-22 - *NAPE Symposium: "Children at the Center: Connecting Partnerships to Student Success." Arlington, Virginia. For registration information, contact NAPE's Web site at www.napehq.org or access their fax-on-demand system at 1-800-924-NAPE.*

December 14-16 - *U.S. Department of Education's Regional Conference on Improving America's Schools. Washington, D.C.*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- *The Parents' Guide to the Information Superhighway* has been prepared by The Children's Partnership, with the National PTA and National Urban League. The publication is available online at no charge at http://www.childrenspartnership.org. Printed copies are $8.00 and can be purchased through The Children's Partnership at 1460 4th Street, Suite 306, Santa Monica, California 90401.
- The 1997 National Association of Partners in Education (NAPE) Symposium entitled "Children at the Center: Connecting Partnerships to Student Success," will take place November 18-22, 1997, at the Crystal Gateway Marriott in Arlington, Virginia. Phone inquiries to NAPE's office can be directed to (703) 836-4880.
- Parents Without Partners (PWP), a grassroots, educational organization comprising more than 50,000 single parents and their children, is celebrating its fortieth anniversary this year. Parents Without Partners is active in the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education and is represented in all 50 states, as well as in Canada and Australia. CU

U.S. Mayors Support President Clinton's Call to Action for American Education

On June 24, the U.S. Conference of Mayors passed an education resolution that applauded President Clinton's Call to Action for American Education in the 21st Century. The resolution cited the need to address the increasing competitiveness of the international economy that requires young people to be better educated, and supported Title I for educationally disadvantaged children, school-to-career programs, the president's school construction and renovation program, technology and reading initiatives, and increased funding for after-school programs.

Mayor Thomas M. Menino of Boston proposed the resolution along with mayors Richard M. Daley of Chicago, Illinois; Sharon Sayles Belton of Minneapolis, Minnesota; Arlene J. Mulder of Arlington Heights, Illinois; and Wellington E. Webb of Denver, Colorado.

President Clinton's Call to Action for American Education in the 21st Century comprises ten goals:

- Set rigorous national standards, with national tests in fourth-grade reading and eighth-grade math to make sure our children master the basics;
- Make sure there is a talented and dedicated teacher in every classroom;
- Help every student read independently and well by the end of third-grade;
- Expand Head Start and challenge parents to get involved early on in their children's learning;
- Expand choice and accountability in public education;
- Make sure our schools are safe, disciplined and drug free, and instill basic American values;
- Modernize school buildings and help support school construction;
- Open the doors of college to all who work hard and make the grade, and make the 13th and 14th years of education as universal as high school;
- Help adults improve their education and skills by transforming the tangle of federal training programs into a simple skill grant; and
- Connect every classroom and library to the Internet by the year 2000 and help all students become technologically literate.

Additional information pertaining to the president's Call to Action is available on the World Wide Web at http://www.ed.gov/updates/PresEDPlan/. Call 1-800-USA-LEARN to obtain a tool kit for the America Goes Back to School effort and the president's Call to Action. CU

Education Excellence Partnership Launches Advertising Campaign to Support High Academic Standards

On July 2, the Education Excellence Partnership (EEP), a coalition of educators, business and public officials working to strengthen the academic future of American children, joined President Clinton in a ceremony at Baltimore's Camden Yards to launch a new series of public service television ads. Ceremony participants included Norman Augustine, chairman and chief executive officer of Lockheed Martin Corporation and chairman of the Education Task Force of The Business Roundtable, Allan H. "Bud" Selig, chairman of the Executive Council of Major League Baseball, and Cal Ripken, third baseman for the Baltimore Orioles.

"Excellence in baseball requires teamwork, hard work and setting high standards of excellence. So does excellence in education," President Clinton said. "The Education Excellence Partnership, including all-star athletes, businesses, governors and teachers, are pitching in to help our young children aim high."

The new public service ads will feature three Major League Baseball players—Tony Gwynn of the San Diego Padres, Brett Butler of the Los Angeles Dodgers and Tom Glavine of the Atlanta Braves. The ads urge mothers and fathers to "be a big league parent" by becoming more involved in their child's school, and offer a free booklet entitled *Strengthening Your Child's Academic Future*. The ads were created by the Leo Burnett Company and will be distributed nationally before the school year by the Advertising Council, the nation's largest producer of public service advertising.

"The kind of partnerships we see on display here today—between business, policy leaders and teachers—are a winning combination and the best possible way to pursue and achieve challenging standards in schools," U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley said. "This advertising effort will result in champions in the classroom."

The Education Excellence Partnership is a joint endeavor of The Business Roundtable, U.S. Department of Education, American Federation of Teachers, National Alliance of Business, National Education Association, National Governors' Association, and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. To obtain a copy of *Strengthening Your Child's Academic Future*, call 1-800-38-BE SMART. CU

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Americans Beat International Averages in Science and Math

The recent results of the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) show that our nation's fourth-graders are near the very top in science achievement in the world. America's fourth-graders are also doing better than ever in mastering the basics of arithmetic. This is the first time in any international comparison that American students in a given grade have exceeded the international average in both mathematics and science.

"The latest TIMSS results show that America's kids can compete with students anywhere in the world," U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley said.

TIMSS is the most thorough international study of math and science education ever conducted, comparing the performance of a half million students, including 33,000 Americans, at levels corresponding to U.S. grades 4, 8, and 12. The fourth-grade findings were in contrast to the TIMSS results released last November showing that our nation's eighth-graders scored above average in science but below the international average in mathematics.

"The results today give us a road map to higher performance," President Clinton said in his announcement of the fourth-grade TIMSS findings. "We're doing a very good job in the early grades, but we've got a lot more work to do in the later ones."

TIMSS data suggests that grades 4 through 8 are years that warrant special attention for U.S. students so that by the eighth-grade, all children can master challenging mathematics, including the foundations of algebra and geometry. Students need to reach this level by the eighth-grade so they will be ready for the more advanced courses in high school that will prepare them for college, productive employment, and lifelong learning.

A number of successful programs across the country help students strengthen mathematics skills between grades 4 and 8. For example, the Jasper Woodbury Series, developed by Vanderbilt University and the National Science Foundation, focuses on grades 5 through 9. The series is designed to align with the standards of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics and is being used in schools across the country. For more information, contact Tom Noser at (615) 322-8070, or consult the Web site at http://peabody.vanderbilt.edu/ltc/general/ltcproj.html.

Another successful program, Project SEED, focuses on grades 4 through 6, engaging students actively in problem solving. Involving students at all ability levels, including students with limited English skills, the program has been implemented in four districts in California—Alameda, Berkeley, Oakland, and West Contra Costa—as well as in Indianapolis, Indiana; Dallas, Texas; Detroit, Michigan; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and Camden, New Jersey. For more information on Project SEED, call (510) 644-3422.

The U.S. Department of Education's Eisenhower National Clearinghouse has an extensive catalogue of materials to support math achievement. For more information, call 1-800-621-5785 or access the Web site at http://www.enc.org. CU

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Community Update

No. 80, September 1997
U.S. Department of Education

Getting Ready for College Early

A college education is an investment for a lifetime of better job opportunities, higher income, and skills and knowledge that can never be taken away. Some parents, especially those who did not attend or finish college themselves, don't realize that preparing a student academically and financially for college should begin by the time a student enters sixth or seventh grade, and continue through middle school and high school. Getting a student ready for college requires building a solid academic foundation, as well as planning for the future *early* by garnering support from teachers, guidance counselors, and community, business and religious organizations, and by obtaining financial aid information from state governments, local colleges and universities, and the U.S. Department of Education.

Economically-at-risk, middle-school-aged students need to know that education after high school is necessary and possible. Teachers and guidance counselors should reach out to students whose lack of finances and information might prevent them from pursuing and reaching higher education goals by encouraging those students to:

- Set high expectations and high standards and plan a high school course schedule early, in the sixth or seventh grade;
- Take challenging courses, especially the college "gateway" courses of algebra in the eighth grade and geometry in the ninth grade;
- Find and connect with mentors who will support their positive goals; and
- Learn about financial aid programs, and take advantage of the tax cuts and savings plans to help families pay for college that are contained in the balanced budget legislation (see page 3).

Here are some examples of programs across the nation that are encouraging high standards and high expectations for middle and high school students:

- **The Equity 2000 Project** is a research-based approach to closing the achievement gap and college-going rate for disadvantaged students by encouraging universal early enrollment in algebra and geometry. For more information, call Vinetta C. Jones at (202) 822-5930.
- **The HP E-Mail Mentor Program** motivates students to excel in math and science by creating one-to-one mentor relationships between Hewlett Packard employees worldwide and fifth through twelfth grade students and teachers throughout the nation. For more information, contact David Neils at davidn@fc.hp.com or Scott Durkin at sdurkin@psd.k12.co.us.
- **TRIO Programs**, which are federally funded and mandated by Congress, currently enable nearly 700,000 Americans, who come from families with incomes under $24,000, to successfully graduate from college. For more information, call Lexy Boudreau at (202) 347-7430.

The U.S. Department of Education's publication *Getting Ready for College Early*, and information about President Clinton's tax credits for college, are available by calling 1-800-USA-LEARN or by visiting http://www.ed.gov/pubs/GettingReadyCollegeEarly/. CU

Special Insert on Family Involvement (see inside)

September Town Meeting Will Highlight Families and Communities Working Together as America Goes Back to School

The September Satellite Town Meeting will focus on the exciting back to school time when all Americans can commit to improving their local schools. As part of the *America Goes Back to School* initiative, the Satellite Town Meeting will feature ways that schools, families and communities can extend learning, especially in reading and math, before and after-school.

U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley and panelists will emphasize the great need for community-wide partnerships to improve education, and share successful ideas for mentoring, tutoring and after-school programs with the satellite audience. Entitled "Back to School: Families and Communities Working Together," the hour-long Satellite Town Meeting will air on Tuesday, September 16, at 8:00 p.m. Eastern time.

The U.S. Department of Education produces the Satellite Town Meeting series in partnership with the National Alliance of Business and the Center for Workforce Preparation, with support from The Bayer Foundation, The Procter & Gamble Fund, and The SC Johnson Wax Fund. Broadcast and cable partners include Discovery Communications, the Public Broadcasting System, and Channel One. The program will be closed-captioned and simulcast in Spanish.

The satellite coordinates are as follows:

C-Band: Galaxy 9, Orbital Location 123 degrees West; Transponder 2; Horizontal Polarity; Channel 2; Downlink Frequency 3740 MHZ; Audio Subcarriers 6.2 MHZ (Spanish) and 6.8 MHZ (English).

Ku-Band: Satellite SBS-6, Orbital Location 74 degrees West; Transponder 14; Vertical Polarity; Channel 14; Downlink Frequency 12043.5 MHZ; Audio Subcarriers 6.2 MHZ (Spanish) and 6.8 MHZ (English).

To participate in the Satellite Town Meeting, ask your local Public Broadcasting System (PBS) member station or Chamber of Commerce if your group can use the facility as a downlink site. Call 1-800-USA-LEARN for further information or to register your participation. Discovery Communications' The Learning Channel will rebroadcast each Satellite Town Meeting in the 1997-98 series. The Learning Channel will rebroadcast the September Satellite Town Meeting on Tuesday, October 28 at 4:00 a.m. Eastern time. CU

School Systems Across the Nation Pledge to Participate in Voluntary National Testing Initiative

Alaska, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, North Carolina, and West Virginia, as well as fifteen urban school districts, including New York City, Los Angeles and Chicago, and Department of Defense schools, will participate in voluntary national tests in fourth grade reading and eighth grade math that reflect high national standards. These tests, which will be developed by the U.S. Department of Education and implemented in 1999, will provide parents and teachers with information about how their students are progressing compared to students in other states, the nation, and other countries.

"Our tests in reading and math will give parents, teachers, and state leaders, wherever they live, an opportunity to measure the progress they want to achieve," U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley said.

The new tests will be made available to states and school districts to assess students in the spring of each year, beginning in the spring of 1999. Use of the tests will be strictly voluntary, and decisions about whether or not to participate will not affect continuing funding in federal programs. The voluntary national tests in the basic skill areas of fourth grade reading and eighth grade math will be modeled on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). In addition, the eighth grade math tests will be linked to the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), so that student scores can be compared to international benchmarks as well as national standards of excellence. While NAEP and TIMSS test only a random sample of students, the new national tests will be administered to all students in participating communities and will produce scores for individual students.

The U.S. Department of Education will make available information that describes the knowledge and skills students must master in order to meet the national standards. Each year, once the tests are given, the test items will be released to the public to further clarify what students must know and be able to do to meet the standards. Educators will be able to use this information as a motivational tool to strengthen teacher preparation and professional development, and promote parental and community involvement in learning.

For more information about the voluntary national tests, call 1-800-USA-LEARN or visit http://www.ed.gov/nationaltests/. CU

Special September 1997 Insert on Family Involvement

Partnership for Family Involvement in Education

Boy Scout Jamboree Highlights Volunteerism

From July 28 through August 5, the Boy Scouts of America held their annual jamboree at Fort A.P. Hill in Bowling Green, Virginia. President Clinton, along with over 30,000 Scouts and 6,000 adult troop leaders and volunteers, attended the event. The theme of this year's jamboree— "Be Prepared for the 21st Century...Character Counts"— emphasized the organization's pledge to commit every scout to complete twelve hours of community service yearly for a total of 200 million community service hours through the year 2000.

The jamboree also hosted the official signing-on of the Boy Scouts of America to the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education. As part of their sign-on commitment, the Boy Scouts will support the U.S. Department of Education's new initiative *Think College Early*, which is intended to make both middle school students and their parents aware of the academic and financial preparations necessary to attend college.

In addition to the recreational activities usually associated with scouting, the jamboree showcased its educational component through the "Merit Badge Midway," which provided Boy Scouts with the opportunity to earn merit badges in subjects ranging from reading to astronomy. The jamboree also showcased the curriculum-based program "Learning for Life," a wholly owned subsidiary of the Boy Scouts of America designed to help schools successfully handle the complexities of contemporary society and enhance student self-confidence, motivation, and self-esteem. The programs's life skills focus is complemented by an educational curriculum that promotes the importance of money management, writing resumes and violence prevention in everyday life, and reaches well over 800,000 students and over 6,200 groups nationwide.

The U.S. Department of Education, in partnership with the Boy Scouts of America and "Learning for Life," is putting together an "idea book" for after-school programs that help meet President Clinton's Call to Action for American Education in the 21st Century. The publication, scheduled for release in February 1998, will offer Boy Scout councils the opportunity to build upon effective examples of partnership efforts in the community. To obtain more information about the Boy Scouts of America, contact John Anthony at (972) 580-2420 or by fax at (972) 580-2502. CU

Deputy Assistant Secretary of Education W. Wilson Goode poses with Associate National Director of Learning for Life R. Allan Gibbs; Assistant Chief Scout Executive Roger Ohmstede; and National Director of Learning for Life John Anthony.

Help Support the America Goes Back to School Initiative

As students around the country head back to school, U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley is challenging all Americans to support the *America Goes Back to School* initiative. This annual effort focuses on improving education across America, emphasizing community partnerships that can begin during the back to school months of August through October and continue throughout the school year.

The national co-chairs of *America Goes Back to School* are family and child advocate Tipper Gore; Drew University President and former New Jersey Governor Thomas H. Kean; actor Michael Keaton; and National PTA President Lois Jean White. The initiative is supported by a 55-member steering committee and over 3,000 members of the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education.

In 1996, *America Goes Back to School* events took place in every state in the nation. Events planned for this year include:

- CNN Newsroom & WorldView, the cable network's educational programming, will go "on the road" around the country during the week of September 8-12, to talk with students and teachers and hold town meetings on various education topics.
- The mayor of Birmingham, Alabama, is sponsoring a back to school rally at the Alabama Fair Grounds to celebrate more than 10,000 children that read over 82,000 books this summer through the READ*WRITE*NOW! program. Rally participants will also lay out their plan to continue their commitment to reading in 38 after-school programs and many churches.
- The nation's 114 Urban League chapters will honor the accomplishments of local 10 to 17-year-olds who are "Doing the Right Thing" in areas such as academics and community service.
- United Airlines will show information on business involvement in education on many of its flights during the month of September.
- Southwest Airlines will kick off its "Adopt-a-Pilot" program, connecting pilots with classrooms to help students learn about math, history and geography.
- The 1997 Kentucky State Teacher of the Year, Rosalind K. Hurley Richards, will sponsor an on-air telethon where people may call in to donate time in the classroom instead of money.

For a free copy of the *America Goes Back to School* kit, call 1-800-USA-LEARN, or visit http://www.ed.gov/Family/agbts. To register your *America Goes Back to School* event, fax a brief description with a contact name and address to (202) 205-9133, or send the material to *America Goes Back to School*, U.S. Department of Education, 600 Independence Avenue, S.W., FB10B, Washington, D.C. 20202-8173, e-mail: agbts@ed.gov. CU

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Congratulations to the 1997 Apple P.I.E. (Parent Involvement in Education) award winners! Cosponsored by the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education, Teachers College at Columbia University, and *Working Mother* magazine, the Apple P.I.E. Awards recognize effective efforts undertaken in support of family involvement in education. Award winners include: IBM; NationsBank; First Union; First Tennessee Bank; SAS Institute; Partnership in School; S.P.L.A.S.H. at Arizona State University; Rochester, Minnesota Public Schools Family Involvement Program; Libros y Familias (Books and Families); Voznesenka School Migrant Education Program; Parents as Teachers (PAT); Susan Werbin of New York; Laura Pickett of Montana; and Joyce L. Epstein of the Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships at Johns Hopkins University.

Calendar

October 16-18 - U.S. Department of Education's Regional Conference on Improving America's Schools, San Diego, California. For information, call 1-800-203-5494.

October 19 - The Big Help-a-thon, sponsored by Nickelodeon, Los Angeles, California. For information, call (212) 258-7080.

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November 18-22 - NAPE Symposium "Children at the Center: Connecting Partnerships to Student Success," Arlington, Virginia. For information, contact NAPE's Web site at http://www.napehq.org or access their fax-on-demand system at 1-800-924-NAPE.

May 7-8 - "Technology in Education Is Everybody's Business," business education conference with The Conference Board. For more information, call (212) 339-0345, fax to (212) 980-7014, or visit orders@conference-board.org.

Balanced Budget Agreement Places Priority on Education

President Clinton and Congress have enacted an agreement to balance the budget and cut taxes over the next five years. The agreement includes billions of dollars in education tax credits to help millions of Americans pursue college, graduate education or part-time study to improve or acquire job skills.

"This budget reforms and cuts yesterday's government so that we can help provide our people with the means to meet the challenges of tomorrow," President Clinton said.

The largest education investment in 30 years, the tax credits will make college and lifelong learning more affordable, and help students and their families get ready for college early. The balanced budget agreement contains the HOPE tax credit for the first two years of undergraduate education, and a 20 percent lifetime learning tax credit to help pay for the junior and senior years of college, graduate, technical or professional education.

"Now, America has two big, new ideas for higher education that are in tune with the times: the HOPE Scholarship, and a tax credit for lifelong learning. They will help families pay for college and usher in a new era of expanded access to higher education," U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley said. "This plan creates smart tax policy and smart education policy for the 21st century."

Key priorities for President Clinton's tax cut plan include:

- **Two-year HOPE tax credit** will provide a maximum $1,500 credit per student per year for the first two years of postsecondary education, making the first two years of college as universal as a high school diploma is today. Students will receive a scholarship of 100 percent on the first $1,000 of tuition and fees and 50 percent on the second $1,000. The credit will be available for college enrollment after December 31, 1997. The credit is phased out for joint filers with incomes between $80,000 and $100,000, and for single filers with incomes between $40,000 and $50,000.
- **20 percent lifetime learning** will benefit third and fourth year undergraduate students, graduate students, and working people who are improving their education and skills. The 20 percent credit per student will be applied to the first $5,000 of tuition and fees through 2002, and to the first $10,000 thereafter. The credit is available for college enrollment after June 30, 1998 and is phased out at the same income levels as for the HOPE Scholarship.
- **Education and retirement savings accounts** will allow penalty-free IRA withdrawals for undergraduate, postsecondary vocational and graduate education expenses. Additionally, taxpayers are given the opportunity to deposit $500 per year into an Education IRA. Earnings would accumulate tax-free and no taxes will be due upon withdrawal for an approved purpose. The Education IRA is phased out for families with incomes between $150,000 and $160,000, and for single filers between $95,000 and $110,000.
- **Employer-provided education benefits** extends Section 127 of the tax code for undergraduates for three years. This provision allows workers to exclude $5,250 of employer-provided education benefits from their taxable income.
- **Student loan interest deduction** will allow a deduction of up to $2,500 per year of interest on education loans for expenses of students enrolled at an institution of higher education. The maximum deduction is $1,000 in 1998, increasing in $500 increments each year until reaching $2,500. The deduction will be available even if the taxpayer does not itemize deductions, and is available to joint filers with incomes between $60,000 and $75,000, and to single filers with incomes between $40,000 and $55,000.
- **Community service loan forgiveness** excludes from taxable income loan amounts forgiven for borrowers who take community service jobs addressing unmet needs. Loan forgiveness programs run by government agencies are already exempt and this provision would extend that to nonprofit tax-exempt charitable or educational institutions.
- **Expanded benefits for pre-paid tuition plans** would exempt from taxation some earnings on pre-paid tuition plans, and extend some benefits to private college programs.

The U.S. Department of Education's new handbook *Getting Ready for College Early*, which is designed for parents of students in middle and junior high school, is available free of charge by calling 1-800-USA-LEARN or by visiting http://www.ed.gov/pubs/GettingReadyCollegeEarly/. Additional information pertaining to President Clinton's education tax credits is available by calling 1-800-USA-LEARN or by visiting http://www.ed.gov/offices/OPE/PPI/hopehome.html. CU

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New American High Schools Initiative Prepares Students for College and Careers

In his Call to Action for American Education in the 21st Century, President Clinton has urged us to "open the doors of college to all...and make the 13th and 14th years of education as universal as high school." In preparation for college and careers, high school students must be able to meet rigorous academic standards while acquiring computer, technical, problem-solving, communication and teamwork skills. The U.S. Department of Education's *New American High Schools* initiative was created in response to this demand.

The *New American High Schools* have been reorganized on the basis of *both* high standards of excellence in academics and the awareness that students need more skills today to be prepared for the global economy of the 21st century. The *New American High Schools* initiative provides students with a comprehensive academic education, and communication and problem-solving skills blended with computer, technical and occupational skills.

The initiative provides students with opportunities to "learn-by-doing" in classrooms, actual workplaces and communities. The *New American High Schools* initiative also gives students access to technology to enhance learning and, most critically, affords them the benefit of strong partnerships between high schools and postsecondary institutions, business/employers, community service organizations, and parents.

Every *New American High School* carries out these principles in ways that work best for each individual school. However, to qualify to become a *New American High School*, each school went through a rigorous selection process and had to meet specific criteria. Presently, fourteen of these model high schools serve students across the United States.

One example is Central Park East Secondary School (CPESS) located in East Harlem, New York. Most of the students attending CPESS are from low-income families and many have a history of average or below-average academic achievement. CPESS not only helps prepare students for college, but makes it an attainable reality. Now, more than 90 percent of CPESS graduates go on to college directly. Every student is required to complete college preparatory courses and participate in 100 hours of a career-oriented internship. To expose students to the university environment, a program called Summer University Opportunities is available at Columbia University, Cornell University, Syracuse University, Cooper Union and City University, among others.

Another CPESS program entitled "Tech-Scouts" allows students to make a two-year commitment to a technology program. During the first year, students learn to trouble shoot hardware and software problems, and become experts in various software applications. During the second year, students are assigned to internships with businesses and community service organizations, using the technological skills they have gained. Like all of the *New American High Schools*, CPESS has developed programs that best fit the unique circumstances and needs of its students.

To obtain more information about the *New American High Schools* initiative, call 1-800-USA-LEARN or visit http://www.ed.gov/offices/OVAE/nahs/. CU

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Community Update

No. 51, October 1997
U.S. Department of Education

The America Reads Challenge:

A year-round effort to ensure that every child reads well and independently by the end of third grade

More than 52 million students have returned to America's classrooms this fall, an enrollment that beats all previous records, and one expected to continue rising before leveling off in the year 2007. U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley announced this trend when he released *A Back to School Special Report on the Baby Boom Echo* in August, and challenged all Americans to help our nation's teachers and schools by finding ways to get involved in improving education across the nation.

The *America Reads Challenge* offers just such an opportunity. Announced by President Clinton earlier this year, the *America Reads Challenge* asks each of us to identify the role we can play—personally and professionally—to help ensure that every child reads well and independently by the end of third grade.

There are several ways you can help meet the *America Reads Challenge*. Hundreds of thousands of teens and adults across the nation have partnered with more than a million children on an individual basis by using the Read*Write*Now! program, a long-term effort to assist schools, communities and families in improving the reading skills of America's students. This past summer, the *America Reads Challenge* sponsored 14 Read*Write*Now! pilot sites that served more than 80,000 at-risk students. To receive free Read*Write*Now! materials, call 1-800-USA-LEARN, or download the materials from the Internet at http://www.ed.gov/PFIE/initiatv.html#rwn.

Schools and communities can tap into tutors through the Federal Work-Study Program, which allows college students participating in this financial aid program to tutor in local pre-school and elementary schools. More than 700 colleges and universities have signed on to the *America Reads Challenge*. For more information, call your local college student financial aid office and community service office or visit http://www.ed.gov/inits/americareads.

U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley reads to a group of young children. The America Reads Challenge initiative asks each of us to identify the role we can play—personally and professionally—to help ensure that every child reads well and independently by the end of third grade.

An additional opportunity for involvement is through the President's Coalition for the *America Reads Challenge*. Coalition members include public and private organizations and businesses who commit to expanding existing literacy programs by encouraging their members and employees to get involved in local community literacy efforts. For more information about the *America Reads Challenge* and the President's Coalition, call 1-800-USA-LEARN or visit http://www.ed.gov/inits/americareads. CU

Special Insert on Family Involvement
(See inside)

October Town Meeting Will Highlight How Schools and Communities Can Gain Access to the Internet

The October Satellite Town Meeting will look at how schools and libraries can afford access to the Internet and use it as a tool for learning. The discussion will focus on the recent Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ruling which will implement "universal service" for schools and libraries (E-rate), and make available up to $2.25 billion dollars in discounts in telecommunication services to schools and libraries in January 1998.

U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley and his guests will discuss how schools and libraries can take advantage and apply for the E-rate. Among the topics to be addressed are the kinds of training that will help schools and libraries use computer and online technologies to their fullest advantage, and the role that parents, communities and businesses can play in supporting technology as a learning tool. Entitled "Preparing Classrooms for the Future: Ensuring Access to the Internet," the hour-long Satellite Town Meeting will air on Tuesday, October 21, at 8:00 p.m. Eastern time.

The U.S. Department of Education produces the Satellite Town Meeting series in partnership with the National Alliance of Business and the Center for Workforce Preparation, with support from The Bayer Foundation, The Procter & Gamble Fund, and The SC Johnson Wax Fund. Broadcast and cable partners include Discovery Communications, the Public Broadcasting System, and Channel One. The program will be closed-captioned and simulcast in Spanish.

The satellite coordinates are as follows:

C-Band: Galaxy 9, Orbital Location 123 degrees West; Transponder 2; Horizontal Polarity; Channel 2; Downlink Frequency 3740 MHZ; Audio Subcarriers 6.2 MHZ (Spanish) and 6.8 MHZ (English).

Ku-Band: Satellite SBS-6, Orbital Location 74 degrees West; Transponder 14; Vertical Polarity; Channel 14; Downlink Frequency 12043.5 MHZ; Audio Subcarriers 6.2 MHZ (Spanish) and 6.8 MHZ (English).

To participate in the Satellite Town Meeting, ask your local Public Broadcasting System (PBS) member station or Chamber of Commerce if your group can use the facility as a downlink site, or call your local public, education, or government access channel. Call 1-800-USA-LEARN for further information or to register your participation. CU

The Learning Channel to Rebroadcast the Satellite Town Meeting

Viewers who can't watch the monthly live broadcast of the U.S. Department of Education's Satellite Town Meeting can see it or tape it when the program is rebroadcast on The Learning Channel (TLC), now available in more than 70 million cable homes. The Learning Channel is an educational network of Discovery Communications, one of the Satellite Town Meeting's distribution partners. TLC offers programming about history, science, and world culture, as well as commercial-free fare for preschoolers. To make the program accessible for taping and later use, TLC will rebroadcast the Satellite Town Meeting from 4:00 a.m. to 5:00 a.m. Eastern time about five weeks after the program airs live. For more information about Discovery or The Learning Channel, call your local cable operator, or visit "Discovery Channel School" on the World Wide Web at http://school.discovery.com/. The Learning Channel rebroadcast schedule is as follows:

October 28, 1997:

"Back to School: Families and Communities Together for Learning"

November 25, 1997:

"Preparing Classrooms for the Future: Ensuring Access to Internet"

December 23, 1997:

"Supporting Quality Teachers: A Talented Teacher in Every Classroom"

February 24, 1998:

"Serving Students with Disabilities: What Families, Schools and Communities Need to Know"

March 24, 1998:

"Raising Student Achievement: Schools, Communities and Challenging Standards"

April 21, 1998:

"Think College Early: Preparing Academically and Financially"

May 26, 1998:

"Making Math Count: World-Class Achievement Starting with Algebra"

June 23, 1998:

"Reading Partners: Teaming Up to Help All Children Read Well"

July 21, 1998:

"Creating a Safe, Disciplined and Drug-Free School: Turning Research into Practice"

For more information about the Satellite Town Meetings or to register your participation, call 1-800-USA-LEARN. CU

Partnership for Family Involvement in Education

National Parents' Day Coalition Hosts Second Annual Conference

The National Parents' Day Coalition (NPDC) will host its second annual parenting conference in Washington, D.C, on October 23-26, 1997. As a member of the U.S. Department of Education's Partnership for Family Involvement in Education, the NPDC seeks to emphasize the importance of parent and family involvement in children's learning. Entitled "Strengthening Families/Building Communities," the conference is part of the *America Goes Back to School* initiative, which highlights community partnerships as a way to improve education across the nation during the back to school months of August through October and throughout the school year.

Conference presentations will include "Engaging Fathers in the Lives of Their Children," "Keeping the Peace—A School and Community Collaborative Conflict Resolution Model," and "Recruiting Parents for Active Participation in Their Child's Education." Other topics will include character education, early parent involvement for education, the role of the media, and how to build effective community partnerships. Through a joint effort of the U.S. Department of Education, the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education and the University of Maryland, a teleconference entitled "Meeting the Challenge to Create Effective School-Church-Family Partnerships for Learning" will be featured on the final day of the conference.

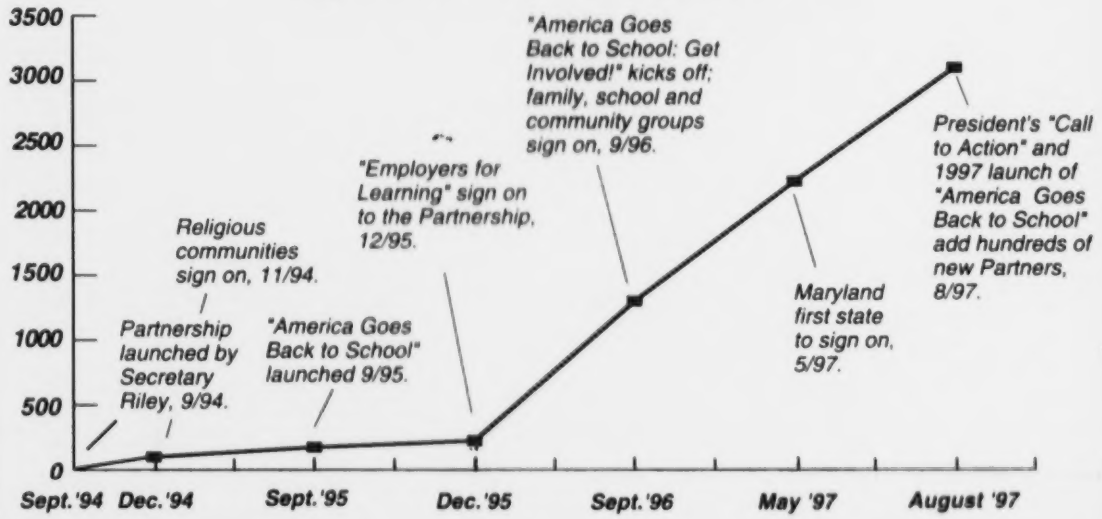
To register for the conference, call the NPDC at (202) 530-0849, or visit their Web site at http://www.parentsday.org. For information on the *America Goes Back to School* initiative, call 1-800-USA-LEARN or visit http://www.ed.gov/Family/agbts/. CU

U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley and Deputy Assistant Secretary of Education W. Wilson Goode pose with Ana "Cha" Margarita Guzman, chair of the President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans, and Sarita Brown, executive director of the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans.

President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans Joins the Partnership

The President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans has joined the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education, which now includes more than 3,000 family, school, employer, community, and religious organizations. The Commission, which issued a report advocating local community partnerships, is comprised of education leaders from across the country. Recently, members of the Commission met with U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley to express their commitment to the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education. CU

Partnership for Family Involvement in Education
September 1994-August 1997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Partnership launched by Secretary Riley, 9/94.
Religious communities sign on, 11/94.
"America Goes Back to School" launched 9/95.
"Employers for Learning" sign on to the Partnership, 12/95.
"America Goes Back to School: Get Involved!" kicks off; family, school and community groups sign on, 9/96.
Maryland first state to sign on, 5/97.
President's "Call to Action" and 1997 launch of "America Goes Back to School" add hundreds of new Partners, 8/97.

Over 3,000 community, family, school, educational, religious and employer organizations belong to the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education. For more information or to join the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education, call 1-800-USA-LEARN.

Join us on May 7-8, 1998 for the business-education conference "Technology in Education is Everybody's Business." The conference is cosponsored by Employers for Learning of the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education and The Conference Board. For more information, call (212) 339-0345, fax to (212) 980-7014 or visit Orders@conference-board.org.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The United States Air Force is launching a children's interactive education Web page in early October. The Web page address is http://www.af.mil/aflinkjr.
- For their celebration of *America Goes Back to School*, the National Community Education Association (NCEA), one of the founding members of the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education, is working with PBS station WETA and other organizations on a multimedia project called "Planet Neighborhood." The series focuses on successful environmental efforts at the grassroots level and how technology can help. Viewers are asked to call their local PBS station to request rebroadcast of the series. For a set of free materials and information while supplies last, contact WETA's Educational Outreach Office at (703) 998-2827, fax to (703) 578-3378, or visit http://www.weta.org/planet.
- The United States Tennis Association (USTA) has joined the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education. Renowned for its tournament, the U.S. Open, the USTA also serves communities across the country through the USTA schools program. The program provides resources, assistance, and training to schools in an effort to introduce tennis and its code of conduct to students. The USTA, headquartered in White Plains, New York, has 500,000 members in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. For more information, call (914) 696-7000. CU

Calendar

October 7 - *"Portraits in Change," a special program for young adolescents will be broadcast live and commercial free on Court TV from 1-2 p.m. Eastern time. Cosponsored by the National Middle School Association, the program will be broadcast at the Newseum in Arlington, Virginia, and downlinked into middle schools via local cable operators or Primestar satellite. For more information, call Scoot MacPherson of Court TV at (212) 973-3251.*

October 16-18 - *U.S. Department of Education's Regional Conference on Improving America's Schools, San Diego, California. For information, call 1-800-203-5494.*

October 19 - *The Big Help-a-thon in Los Angeles, California, sponsored by Nickelodeon. For information, call (212) 258-7080.*

October 23-26 - *National Parents' Day Coalition Annual Conference, Satellite Broadcast and Awards Ceremony, Washington, D.C.*

November 5 - *"Partners for Learning: Preparing Teachers to Involve Families," a teleconference hosted by Vice President Al Gore and U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley. The program will air from 2-4 p.m. Eastern time.*

Community Partnerships Can Keep Schools Open as Community Learning Centers, Town Meeting Audience Learns

The September Satellite Town Meeting, "Back to School: Families and Communities Together for Learning," aired on Tuesday September 16, before a live audience in Washington, D.C. Hosted by U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley and Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education Gerald Tirozzi, the teleconference was the first town meeting of the 1997-98 school year.

The town meeting highlighted the *America Goes Back to School* initiative, as well as President Clinton's proposed budget for Community Learning Centers to help schools and communities expand after-school learning opportunities. The program also focused on *The America Reads Challenge*, which emphasizes after-school tutoring for elementary students who need help in reading.

The program featured John Hodge Jones, superintendent of the Murfreesboro City Schools in Tennessee; Josephine Hamb Robinson, director of the Chicago Commons Americorps Program in Illinois; Tina Gonzales, a parent leader at Intermediate School 218 in Washington Heights, New York; and Ron Mertz, president of Eco-Scrap and chair of the 4-H After-School Activity Program in Los Angeles, California.

Panelists encouraged parents, educators, and community and business leaders to:

- Spend time reading to and with a child so he or she can read well by the end of third grade.
- Coach a child in math so he or she is motivated and prepared to take algebra by the eighth grade.
- Support after-school programs for elementary and middle school students that extend learning and educate students to prevent substance abuse.
- Assist teachers by recruiting and organizing tutors for help after-school, weekends and during the summer.
- Help to get middle and high school students and their parents thinking about college early, and learn about the new education tax credits.
- Learn how your school, school district and state can sign up to take the 1999 national tests in fourth grade reading and eighth grade math to make sure students are mastering the basics.

A copy of the *America Goes Back to School* kit for families, as well as the U.S. Department of Education's publication *Keeping Schools Open as Community Learning Centers*, is available by calling 1-800-USA-LEARN or by visiting http://www.ed.gov/pubs/LearnCenters/. CU

Communities and States Sign Up for the Voluntary National Tests

From Massachusetts to Kentucky to Alaska, seven states, as well as fifteen school districts and Department of Defense schools, are planning to participate in voluntary national tests in fourth grade reading and eighth grade math. Together, these states and districts represent almost 10 million children from kindergarten through twelfth grade. The proposed national voluntary tests, which would be overseen by the independent bipartisan National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB), would be available in the spring of 1999. The tests would provide parents, teachers and principals with useful information about how their students are progressing in the core basics at pivotal times in their education no matter where they live in America.

"The national tests will provide us with a credible measure of student achievement to build private sector and parent support to improve our schools," Philadelphia Mayor Edward Rendell said.

Jim Barksdale, chief executive officer and president of Netscape Communications, and L. John Doerr, partner in the firm of Kleiner, Perkins, Caulfield and Byers, agree. "President Clinton's national testing initiative offers a new opportunity to use widely accepted national benchmarks in reading and math against which states, school districts and parents can judge student performance," they said on behalf of 240 technology industry leaders who support high national education standards in reading and math.

"A voluntary national test would give teachers and parents the ability to measure their students and children against high national standards," said Gerald. D. Morris, director of legislation at the American of Federation of Teachers.

The voluntary national tests would be modeled on the widely accepted National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). In addition, the eighth grade math tests would be linked to the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), so that achievement scores can be compared to international benchmarks as well as to national standards of excellence. While NAEP and TIMSS test only a random sample of students, the national tests would be, in a sense, a personalized version of the NAEP, and would produce scores for individual students so that parents, teachers and education leaders can provide extra help to students. For more information about the voluntary national tests, call 1-800-USA-LEARN or visit http://www.ed.gov/nationaltests/. CU

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Volunteerism and Community Service Can Help Improve Education Across the Nation

Americans across the country are finding time in their busy schedules to volunteer and help improve the quality of children's education. Whether tutoring or mentoring, volunteers realize the importance of spending even one or two hours a week to improve education in their communities. The following organizations have pledged their commitment to children's education through both the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education and the President's Summit on America's Future:

- **The PTA** at Mount Vernon High School in Alexandria, Virginia, increased attendance at monthly PTA meetings by working with school administration and the community. Together, they succeeded in enlisting 100 percent of the teachers and improved student and parent involvement at the school. For more information, call The National PTA at (312) 670-6782.
- **The National Retired Teachers Association (NRTA)** is following up on its promise at the President's Summit on America's Future by offering its first wave of 45 million volunteer hours on October 13, the first Retired Educators' Day. NRTA's goal is to mentor and teach 1.5 million children in 2,000 communities by the year 2000. For more information, call Annette Norsman at (202) 434-2380.
- **The Boy Scouts of America** and each local council has committed each youth to serve 12 hours of community service yearly for a total of 200 million community service hours through the year 2000. Students and teachers in each local community will find that their local scout council is a great resource for volunteers, particularly through service learning. For more information, call John Anthony of Learning for Life at (972) 580-2420.
- **The Appleseed Ridge Girl Scout Council** in Ohio held a Family Literacy Camp where summer school children participated in a one-day reading, science, and outdoor program. As part of the Read*Write*Now! year-round effort, the children also completed follow-up letter writing activities at school with their teachers. For more information, please contact your local Girl Scout council.
- **ASPIRA Association, Inc.** offers a year-round program for mathematics and science in three cities—New York, Philadelphia, and Miami—to support the development of Puerto Rican and Latino middle school students. For more information or to become a mentor, call Al Starapoli at (202) 835-3600, extension 137.
- **The General Conference of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church**, North American Division, is recruiting 3,000 new reading tutors over the next five years through their kindergarten through university-level educational institutions. This effort is part of a plan to initiate 100 pilot tutoring projects throughout their network of community-based centers in ten cities in its first year. For more information, call Sandra Brown at (301) 680-6490.

For more information on the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education and the *America Reads Challenge*: Read*Write*Now! program, call 1-800-USA-LEARN or visit http://www.ed.gov/Family/. CU

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Community Update

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U.S. Department of Education

What Really Matters in American Education

Editor's Note: *On September 23, 1997, U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley addressed the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. Below are excerpts from the speech, "What Really Matters in American Education." The entire speech and related documents are available on the World Wide Web at http://www.ed.gov/Speeches/09-1997/970923.html.*

In the last few weeks, I have visited with parents, teachers, students and community leaders in more than a dozen states from Alaska to Florida including Wyoming, Colorado, and Ohio. . . .One of the strongest impressions I have is that we have some very crowded schools. Right now we have 52.2 million young people in our schools, a new national record....A second impression is that a new American consensus has now developed about how to improve education. . . .There is a growing emphasis, for example, on parent involvement and early childhood and the importance of pre-k and kindergarten for all children.

U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley visits with a group of young students.

The American people recognize that progress is only going to happen if we make sure that every child has mastered the basics....This is why 79 percent of all Americans support voluntary national tests according to the latest *Wall Street Journal* poll, and why the American people have made education the number one issue that should concern even the federal government.

I believe that the two national voluntary tests in reading and math, coupled with a strong investment in education improvements, can help drive American education forward....These include a stronger focus on safe, disciplined and drug-free schools; a greater investment in technology; and a growing recognition—even among young people—that taking the tough core courses pays off.

Public education is beginning to improve. This is why we need to stay focused on what really matters and not get sidetracked by divisive issues like vouchers, which take money away from public schools at a time of record enrollments and needed changes....Almost 90 percent of all of our young people go to public schools and the great majority of our public schools are successful. Vouchers are bad for both public and private schools.

If we focus in on what we agree on, rather than on what divides us—we can make the next ten years the "golden era" of American education....We know how to fix our schools. Now is the time to roll up our sleeves and get it done. CU

Special Insert on Family Involvement
(See inside)

Community Update *is available on the World Wide Web at http://www.ed.gov/G2K/community.*

Please join us on Monday, November 10 at 8:00 p.m. Eastern time for "Financial Aid Night." The live, interactive teleconference will be hosted by U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley. Call 1-800-USA-LEARN for further information.

November Town Meeting Will Focus on Supporting Quality Teachers

The November Satellite Town Meeting will look at how schools and communities can attract, prepare and retain high-quality teachers. The discussion will focus on how higher teaching standards can improve the working conditions and overall attractiveness of the teaching profession. The program will also highlight how schools and communities can effectively link teacher preparation with school improvement.

U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley and his guests will discuss how we can improve teacher recruitment and ensure qualified teachers in every classroom, as well as the kinds of preparation and professional development that teachers need to enable them to help students succeed in school. The program will also highlight the various ways we can encourage and reward knowledgeable and skilled teachers, as well as the role that parents, communities and businesses play in supporting high standards for both students and teachers. Entitled "Supporting Quality Teachers: A Talented Teacher in Every Classroom," the hour-long Satellite Town Meeting will air on Tuesday, November 18, at 8:00 p.m. Eastern time.

The U.S. Department of Education produces the Satellite Town Meeting series in partnership with the National Alliance of Business and the Center for Workforce Preparation, with support from The Bayer Foundation, The Procter & Gamble Fund, and The SC Johnson Wax Fund. Broadcast and cable partners include Discovery Communications, the Public Broadcasting Service, and Channel One. The program will be closed-captioned and simulcast in Spanish.

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Ku-Band: Satellite SBS-6, Orbital Location 74 degrees West; Transponder 4; Vertical Polarity; Channel 4; Downlink Frequency 11798.5 MHZ; Audio Subcarriers 6.2 MHZ (Spanish) and 6.8 MHZ (English).

To participate in the Satellite Town Meeting, ask your local Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) member station or Chamber of Commerce if your group can use the facility as a downlink site, or call your local public, education, or government access channel. Call 1-800-USA-LEARN for further information or to register your participation or visit http://www.ed.gov/inits/stm/. CU

The E-rate Can Help Prepare Our Classrooms for the Future, Town Meeting Audience Learns

The October Satellite Town Meeting "Preparing Classrooms for the Future: Ensuring Access to the Internet," aired on Tuesday, October 21, before a live audience in Washington, D.C. Hosted by U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley and Linda Roberts, the special advisor to the U.S. Department of Education on technology, the teleconference linked hundreds of family and school groups across the country.

The Satellite Town Meeting explored the Federal Communications Commission's May 1997 decision to implement universal service or the "E-rate," which makes available, as of January 1, 1998, up to $2.25 billion dollars in discounts in telecommunications services to schools and libraries across the country. The program also highlighted ways that schools and libraries can develop long-term technology plans and use the discounts of the E-rate to improve technology and learning.

The program featured Julia L. Johnson, chair of the Florida Public Service Commission and the Federal/State Joint Board on Universal Service; Robin I. Freeman, principal of Blackstock Junior High School in Oxnard, California; Steve Fultz, a parent and a member of the Anderson School Community Corporation in Anderson, Indiana; Stephen Kohn, director of education initiatives at Bell Atlantic in New York City; and Kathleen "K.G." Ouye, a city librarian at San Mateo Public Library in San Mateo, California.

Panelists encouraged schools and libraries to:

- Develop long-term technology plans and prepare to apply for the E-rate.
- Provide teachers and librarians with the training they need to use the technology.
- Involve parents, businesses, and the entire community in expanding and sharing technology resources.

The U.S. Department of Education's publications *Getting American Students Ready for the 21st Century* and *A Status Report and Update on the E-rate: Providing Schools and Libraries with Affordable Access to the Information Superhighway* are available by calling 1-800-USA-LEARN. Additional information about the E-rate is available by calling (888) CALL-FCC or by visiting the U.S. Department of Education's Web site at http://www.ed.gov/Technology. CU

Special November/December 1997 Insert on Family Involvement

Partnership for Family Involvement in Education

New Report Links Fathers' Involvement with Children's Academic Success

On October 2, Vice President Al Gore and U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley released a new report entitled *Fathers' Involvement in Their Children's Schools.* The report, which the U.S. Department of Education issued with data collected by the National Center for Education Statistics from the 1996 National Household Education Survey, highlights the link between family involvement in education and children's academic success.

"This study provides hard evidence about the powerful and positive influence that parents can have as full and equal partners when they make the commitment to help their children get a good education," Vice President Gore said.

The report describes the extent to which fathers and mothers are involved in their children's learning. A key finding of the report was that fathers and mothers are more likely to be involved in their children's education when schools welcome family involvement. Parental involvement was also higher when the school provided a safe, disciplined learning environment and when teachers and students respected each other. The report also found that, while having one parent actively involved in a child's education is important, having both parents involved strengthened a child's chances for academic success. Data for the report was collected from a nationally representative sample of almost 17,000 parents and/or guardians of different racial-ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds with students in kindergarten through twelfth grade.

Key findings of the report are that:

- Children are more likely to get mostly A's, and less likely to repeat a grade, if their fathers are involved in their schools.
- Children do better in school when their fathers are involved, regardless of whether their fathers live with them and whether their mothers are also involved.
- Many fathers in two-parent families, as well as fathers not living with their children, have low involvement.
- Single fathers are far more likely to be involved in their children's schools than fathers in two-parent families.
- The relationships between fathers' involvement and children's success in school are important, regardless of income, race-ethnicity, or the parent's education.

The importance of fathers' involvement in their children's schools was illustrated through the experiences of two fathers—a psychology professor and a taxi driver—and their children who participated in the program. While the children acknowledged professional differences between their respective fathers, they also made clear that their success in school was due, in large part, to their fathers', as well as their mothers' active involvement and concern for their education.

To obtain free copies of *Fathers' Involvement in Their Children's Schools,* call the National Library of Education at 1-800-424-1616 or visit http://nces.ed.gov/pubs98/fathers/index.html.

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As part of the America Goes Back to School initiative, U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley and U.S. Secretary of Transportation Rodney E. Slater helped kick off Southwest Airline's "Adopt-A-Pilot" program. Southwest Airlines pilots will mentor fifth-grade students in 52 cities around the country in geography, math, physics, civics, history, and aviation.

Calendar

November 16-18 *U.S. Department of Education's Regional Conference on Improving America's Schools, Dallas, Texas. For information, call 1-800-203-5494.*

November 18-20 *National Association of Partners in Education (NAPE) Symposium, "Children at the Center: Connecting Partnerships to Student Success," Arlington, Virginia. For registration information, contact NAPE's Web site at http://www.napehq.org or access their fax-on-demand system at 1-800-954-NAPE.*

December 14-16 *U.S. Department of Education's Regional Conference on Improving America's Schools, Washington, D.C. For information, call 1-800-203-5494.*

December 15 *National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education (NCPIE) Information Fair, Sheraton Washington Hotel. The Information Fair, which coincides with the December 14-16, 1997, Improving America's Schools conference in Washington, D.C., features information from more than 50 organizations that support family involvement in education. For more information, call Sue Ferguson at (202) 822-8405 ext. 55 or e-mail ferguson@ncpie.org.*

May 7-8 *"Technology in Education Is Everybody's Business," a business education conference with The Conference Board. For more information, call (212) 339-0345, fax to (212) 980-7014, or visit orders@conference-board.org.*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- We welcome the many new members of the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education, including Cable in the Classroom. Through the *Cable in the Classroom Comes Home* initiative, parents are encouraged to help schools build educational video libraries in an effort to increase awareness about free, educational programming available to schools through local cable companies.
- The Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE) has joined the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education. As a venerable and extensive professional and cultural organization, SHPE's Advancing Careers in Engineering (ACE) program exposes K-12 students to career opportunities in math, engineering and science through tutoring and mentoring by its professional members.
- A new report developed by the Harvard Family Research Project emphasizes the critical role of teacher preparation for the success of family involvement in education. The study, *New Skills for New Schools: Preparing Teachers in Family Involvement*, was released in connection with the November 5 teleconference hosted by Vice President Al Gore and U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley. Key findings in this study point to a lag in teacher preparation in family involvement that is far behind school efforts to promote family involvement. The report also identifies examples of effective practices that address the discrepancy between educators' professional development and the critical skills teachers need in the area of family involvement in education. To request a free copy of this publication while supplies last, call 1-800-USA-LEARN.
- The business and education conference "Technology in Education Is Everybody's Business," will be held on May 7-8, 1998, in New York City. The conference, cosponsored by Employers for Learning of the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education and The Conference Board, will focus on ways that technology efforts can promote student learning and achievement, empower teachers and families to help students learn, use emerging business applications to teach new knowledge and skills, link schools to the world of work, and expand learning throughout the community. For registration information, call The Conference Board at (212) 339-0345, visit http://www.conference-board.org, or write to: The Conference Board, P.O. Box 4026, Church Street Station, New York, New York 10261-4026. CU

White House Conference Highlights Importance of Quality Child Care, After-School and Summer Programs

President and Mrs. Clinton were the hosts of the White House Conference on Child Care, a one-day conference held on October 23. The conference brought together state and federal officials, business leaders and child care advocates to explore how the public and private sector can respond to the need for safe, affordable, quality child care and after-school programs for American families who are struggling to be both good parents and responsible employees. The conference was broadcast to 110 sites across the nation.

"During those times when children can't be with their parents, they must get care that keeps them safe and helps them learn and grow," President Clinton said. "Too often, child care is unaffordable, inaccessible and, sometimes, even unsafe."

President Clinton announced a five-year, $300 million scholarship program to help child care providers get additional training, and proposed legislation to improve background checks. The president also emphasized the importance of using community service to strengthen and expand after-school programs. Conference panelist U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley also challenged Americans to form school-community partnerships to expand the availability of quality after-school and summer programs that extend learning opportunities for students.

The conference speakers included: U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala; U.S. Secretary of the Treasury Robert Rubin; Governor James Hunt of North Carolina; Ellen Galinsky, president and co-founder of the Families and Work Institute; Major General John G. Meyer, Jr. of the U.S. Army; Jane Maroney, state legislator of the state of Delaware; Dr. Susan Aronson, a national board member of the American Academy of Pediatrics; John J. Sweeney, president of the AFL-CIO; and Doug Price, president of FirstBank of Colorado.

Additional information pertaining to the conference is available on the World Wide Web at http://www.whitehouse.gov/WH/New/Childcare/. CU

Celebrate the Century Encourages Students to Put Their Stamp on History

In January 1998, the Postal Service will unveil *Celebrate the Century*, an historical stamp program. For the first time, the American public—including students—will help determine which significant people, events and trends of the 20th century will be honored on postage stamps.

In partnership with the U.S. Department of Education and over a dozen education associations, the U.S. Postal Service has developed materials for a two-year program primarily for grades 3-6. Teachers will receive free materials that integrate history with subjects such as art, geography, language, arts, math, science and computer technology, as well as starter kits and materials for each decade beginning with the 1950s and concluding with an overview of the 1900s through the 1940s.

Subjects for these stamps will be determined two ways: First, by the Postal Service, which has selected stamp subjects for the years 1900-1949. Second, the American public will be invited to vote on subjects to be included on *Celebrate the Century* stamps for the 1950s-1990s decades by selecting stamp subjects from five categories: people and events, arts and entertainment, lifestyle, sports, and science and technology.

Ballots for each decade will be available at all post offices, at special promotional events, in selected publications, and in schools. Students will learn about the subject matter from the classroom materials provided by the U.S. Postal Service, allowing them to make informed voting decisions. The U.S. Postal Service will issue a sheet of 15 commemorative stamps for each decade of the 20th century.

While *Celebrate the Century* will honor the nation's past with these commemorative stamps, the U.S. Postal Service will also encourage students to illustrate their vision of the future by participating in an international student stamp design contest. In the United States, the contest will run from September 9 through October 31, 1998. Two finalists will be selected from each state and U.S. territories. Four winning stamp designs will be announced in the first quarter of 1999 and unveiled in the third quarter. The stamps will be issued in 2000. Teachers interested in receiving free *Celebrate the Century* materials may write to *Celebrate the Century*, U.S. Postal Service, P.O. Box 44342, Washington, D.C. 20078-0026. CU

The January 1998 issue of Community Update will highlight the millennium initiative which will honor our nation's past and celebrate the future.

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Smithsonian Offers Print and Video Study Tools for Classrooms and After-School Programs

The Smithsonian's National Museum of American Art has developed a series of print and video study kits available for use in the classroom or after school. All the kits contain a 28-minute video, study guides, and color slides and/or print reproductions. The four kits are titled: *Land and Landscape: Views of America's History and Culture; African-American Artists: Affirmation Today; Public Sculpture: America's Legacy; Latino Art & Culture in the United States*. The *Latino Art & Culture* kit includes a bilingual study guide and subtitled videotape.

Land and Landscape: Views of America's History and Culture examines the history of American landscape painting and photography from the early 19th century to the present. Its goal is to develop a heightened awareness of the significance of America's wilderness, geologic wonders, agricultural abundance, and ecological diversity in shaping the nation's social, cultural, and political history. Topics in the video include the wilderness, transportation, land management and agriculture, and the industrial landscape. The study guide provides background information on historical stages of interaction with the land, from exploration of uncharted territories to historical and modern debates on land ownership and management issues.

African-American Artists: Affirmation Today investigates the historical influence and continuing significance of African-American art and culture and the ways in which five contemporary artists have tapped the spiritual and social underpinnings of black American life. The video features artists Lois Mailou Jones, Fred Brown, Keith Morrison, Sam Gilliam, and Leroy Almon. A 208-page reference book, in addition to the study guide, highlight 31 artists and their work.

Public Sculpture: America's Legacy encourages awareness of local, regional, and national history. The materials facilitate discussion about how commemorative sculptures such as the Iwo Jima Memorial and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial reflect the nation's values and changing attitudes. The video focuses on national monuments expressing heroic ideals or commemorating great leaders, followed by visits to public sculpture sites in communities across the country. The study guide provides background information from the Civil War to the present.

Latino Art & Culture in the United States traces artistic and cultural contributions to history and contemporary life in this country by people of Latin American heritage. From the craft traditions of Mexican-Americans in the Southwest to contemporary Cuban-American and Puerto Rican art, the collections of the National Museum of American Art provide the basis for instructional materials focusing on selected aspects of the Latino experiences in the United States. The Smithsonian study kits may be purchased through Crystal Productions by calling 1-800-255-8629.

CU

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Taking Algebra and Geometry Early Puts Students on Road to College and Good Careers

The latest research shows that taking rigorous mathematics courses, such as algebra and geometry early in secondary schools, is a gateway to college and future employment. A recent report released by U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley, entitled *Mathematics Equals Opportunity*, shows that 83 percent of students who take algebra and geometry enroll in college, more than double the percentage of students who do not take these courses (36 percent). Taking algebra and geometry is particularly important for low-income students, with 71 percent of those taking the courses enrolling in college, compared with 27 percent of those who do not. Chemistry is also very important as a college preparatory course.

Mathematics Equals Opportunity summarizes data showing that in the Information Age, demands for mathematical skills are continually increasing. The Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts that some of the fastest growing job categories will require substantial mathematics preparation, including those for computer scientists, systems analysts, and medical assistants. A recent U.S. Department of Commerce report on the shortage of information technology workers also confirms that we will need more workers skilled in math as computer and data processing become more important in our economy. Even for high school graduates who do not attend college right out of high school, having strong math skills will make a significant difference in earnings.

Students who have the opportunity to master the foundations of algebra by the end of eighth-grade are ready to take geometry, chemistry, calculus and other courses in high school that prepare them for college and careers. Currently, only 25 percent of our students have completed algebra by the end of eighth-grade, but they have a clear advantage in preparation for advanced mathematics. Approximately 60 percent of students enrolled in calculus took algebra when they were in eighth-grade.

In most other industrialized nations, almost all students study algebra and some geometry by the eighth-grade. Recognizing the importance of basic and advanced mathematics skills to prepare students for a lifetime of success, President Clinton proposed a voluntary national test in mathematics at the eighth-grade. The test, which was approved by Congress, will be developed by the independent, bipartisan National Assessment Governing Board. The test will be available to interested school districts and states.

Mathematics Equals Opportunity found that **mathematics achievement is linked to the courses students take, not whether students attend a public or private school.** Only 63 percent of all students take algebra and geometry, and for low-income students, the percentage drops to 46 percent. Parent involvement was found to increase the likelihood that students will take challenging courses like algebra and geometry.

Included in *Mathematics Equals Opportunity* are action steps for parents, educators, and policy makers. Suggestions for parents include discussing with their child's math teacher how to support classroom learning, ensuring that children in grades K-7 are being prepared for the transition to algebra, and talking with children about how math is used in their own work or the careers of adults they know. Ideas for policy makers include giving all students the opportunity to take algebra I or a similar course covering the fundamentals of algebra by the end of eighth-grade, strengthening preparation and professional development for math teachers, and supporting parent involvement in math learning. The full report is available at http://www.ed.gov/pubs/math or by calling 1-800-USA-LEARN. CU

"Students who have the opportunity to master the foundations of algebra by the end of eighth-grade are ready to take geometry, chemistry, calculus and other courses in high school that prepare them for college and careers."

Special Insert on Family Involvement
(See inside)

Community Update *is available on the World Wide Web at http://www.ed.gov/G2K/community*

The E-rate can help prepare our classrooms for the future. As of January 1, 1998, up to $2.25 billion dollars in discounts in telecommunications services is available to schools and libraries across the country. For more information, call 1-800-USA-LEARN, or (888) CALL-FCC, or visit http://www.ed/Technology.

January Town Meeting Will Focus on Serving the Needs of Students with Disabilities

The January Satellite Town Meeting will look at ways that families, educators and communities can work together to improve the quality of education for students with disabilities and provide schools with the tools to assess what all children are learning. The program will include information about the recent amendments to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which will give children with disabilities an individualized education designed to meet their unique needs.

U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley will discuss how schools can work effectively with families of students with disabilities, as well as the best ways to ensure that students with disabilities are included in regular preschools and classrooms, school-to-work programs, and all activities of school life to prepare them for the working world. Entitled "Serving Students with Disabilities: What Families, Schools and Communities Need to Know," the hour-long Satellite Town Meeting will air on Tuesday, January 20, at 8:00 p.m. Eastern time.

The U.S. Department of Education produces the Satellite Town Meeting series in partnership with the National Alliance of Business and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, with support from The Bayer Foundation, The Procter & Gamble Fund, and The SC Johnson Wax Fund. Broadcast and cable partners include Discovery Communications, the Public Broadcasting Service, and Channel One. The January Satellite Town Meeting will also be broadcast live on Kaleidoscope Television. The program will be closed-captioned and simulcast in Spanish.

The satellite coordinates are as follows:

C-Band: Galaxy 9, Orbital Location 123 degrees West; Transponder 1; Vertical Polarity; Channel 1; Downlink Frequency 3720 MHZ; Audio Subcarriers 6.2 MHZ (Spanish) and 6.8 MHZ (English).

Ku-Band: Satellite SBS-6, Orbital Location 74 degrees West; Transponder 11; Horizontal Polarity; Channel 11; Downlink Frequency 11970 MHZ; Audio Subcarriers 6.2 MHZ (Spanish) and 6.8 MHZ (English).

To participate in the Satellite Town Meeting, ask your local Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) member station or Chamber of Commerce if your group can use the facility as a downlink site, or call your local public, education, or government access channel. Call 1-800-USA-LEARN for additional information or to register your participation, or visit http://www.ed.gov/inits/stm/. CU

Quality Teaching Is the Cornerstone to School Improvements, Town Meeting Audience Learns

The November Satellite Town Meeting "Supporting Quality Teachers: A Talented Teacher in Every Classroom," aired on Tuesday, November 18, before a live audience in Washington, D.C. Hosted by U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley and Terry Dozier, the special advisor to the U.S. Department of Education on teaching, the teleconference linked via satellite over 300 family and school groups across the nation.

The Satellite Town Meeting featured a discussion of the report issued by the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, which describes the critical challenge of recruiting and preparing two million new teachers to replace an aging teaching force and accommodate growing student enrollments in the next ten years. The town meeting also focused on ways that schools and communities—including those in rural and urban areas—can attract, prepare and retain good teachers.

The program featured Carl Cohn, superintendent of the Long Beach Unified School District in California; Evelyn Dandy, program director of the Pathways to Teaching Program at Armstrong Atlantic State University in Savannah, Georgia; Virginia Ward, a teacher at James Island High School in Charleston, South Carolina; and Arturo Pacheco, dean at the University of Texas at El Paso. Panelists encouraged schools and communities to consider the following questions as they face the challenge of recruiting and preparing teachers:

- What are we doing to ensure that high-quality teachers are recruited into the profession?
- Are new teachers prepared with the knowledge and skills they need to teach all students to high standards and are they certified to teach in their subject areas?
- Does our state have rigorous standards for teacher licensing?
- What are we doing to support beginning teachers and encourage and reward good teaching?
- What are we doing about teachers who are performing poorly?

Published by the U.S. Department of Education, *Excellence & Accountability in Teaching: A Guide to U.S. Department of Education Programs and Resources* and other documents related to excellence in teaching are available by calling 1-800-USA-LEARN. *Excellence & Accountability in Teaching: A Guide to U.S. Department of Education Programs and Resources* is also available online at http://www.ed.gov/pubs/ExcellAcctTeach/. CU

Special January 1998 Insert on Family Involvement

Partnership for Family Involvement in Education

Vice President Gore Highlights Importance of Teacher Preparation for Family Involvement in Education

***Editor's Note**: On November 5, Vice President Al Gore and U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley hosted the teleconference "Partners for Learning: Preparing Teachers to Involve Families," which addressed the importance of teacher preparation for family involvement in education. The teleconference was preceded by a ceremony to mark USA TODAY's sign-on to the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education. Following the broadcast, the Partnership's Apple PIE Awards were presented by Partner members Working Mother magazine, Teachers College of Columbia University, and the National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education (NCPIE). To order a free copy of the tape, "Partners for Learning: Preparing Teachers to Involve Families," call 1-800-USA-LEARN. The following are excerpts from Vice President Gore's remarks at the teleconference.*

. . . The most promising approach to improving our schools may be the oldest and most obvious: getting families more involved in their children's education. I agree with Secretary Riley that the American family must be the rock on which a good education is built.

. . . Tipper and I hosted our sixth national conference on family policy this summer in Nashville on the topic of "Families and Learning." We learned that one-third of all students say their parents don't know how they're doing in school. We learned that 80 percent of families say teachers and parents need to do a better job of working together. We also announced several initiatives to promote better partnerships between families and schools —including today's teleconference. . . .

Today we've heard from parents, employers, administrators, teachers, and those who TEACH teachers. We know that for families to be real partners in their children's education, a lot of people will have to make a major commitment to change. We also know that family involvement doesn't end with parent-teacher conferences or PTA meetings—although those things are important. We need to do more.

That's why I want to issue challenges to everyone participating in this teleconference today: I challenge schools of education to make it a cornerstone of your curriculum and activities to prepare future teachers to involve families in their children's education. I challenge teachers to reach out to parents and families and make them welcome partners in your classrooms and schools. I challenge school principals and administrators to make it known to teachers and parents alike—that your school places the highest possible priority on family involvement. I also challenge principals to invest in technology that can improve communication between teachers and parents—from phones, to voice mail, to e-mail, to the latest Web-based technologies. I challenge employers to establish family-friendly policies that encourage employees to become involved in their children's schools. I challenge families to tell your children and their teachers that you want to be actively involved, show up at your children's activities, and talk with your children about their work and activities each evening. Finally, I challenge students to expect the best from themselves and reach out to your parents, teachers, family members, and friends for support. Your future depends on it, and so does ours. CU

U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley congratulated USA TODAY and CEO Thomas Curley for signing on to the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education. USA TODAY hosted the sign-on ceremony and reception prior to the November teleconference, "Partners for Learning: Preparing Teachers to Involve Families."

Calendar

February 14-17 - *Communities in Schools' "Seeking Solutions Through Partnerships for Youth." To register, call 1-888-231-4851 or write to Sheryl Edwards, Washington Inc., 1225 19th Street, N.W., 5th Floor, Washington, D.C. 20036.*

April 14-18 - *"Linking Support Systems for Students and Families," the national convention of the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), will take place in Orlando, Florida. For program information, call (301) 657-0270, ext. 216; e-mail mharvey@naspweb.org; or visit http://www.naspweb.org.*

May 7-8 - *"Technology in Education Is Everybody's Business," a business-education conference with The Conference Board. For more information, call (212) 339-0345, fax to (212) 980-7014, or visit orders@conference-board.org.*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **The Center for Law and Education** has released a new publication entitled *Urgent Message: Families Crucial to School Reform*, which emphasizes the need to include family involvement in school reform efforts. The cost for this publication is $14.95 plus $3.00 shipping and handling. Fax orders to (202) 986-6648, or write to the Center for Law and Education, 1875 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009.
- **The Center for Work and Family at Boston College** has issued a work-family policy paper series that incudes *A Catalyst for Educational Change: Promoting the Involvement of Working Parents in Their Children's Education*. This paper examines the role of family involvement as a critical business strategy with the potential for improving student academic achievement. The price per report is $50.00 plus shipping and handling. Copies can be ordered at the Web site at http://www.bc.edu/cwf, or by fax request at (617) 552-2859.
- **Hemmings Motor News** supports a Web site that describes how communities in Vermont have developed activities for a first day of school celebration devoted to family involvement in education. For more information, visit http://www.firstday.org.
- **The U.S. Department of Education** has issued new materials on family involvement in education. These products are available free of charge by calling 1-800-USA-LEARN. Materials include:
- *New Skills for New Schools: Preparing Teachers in Family Involvement*, which looks at effective examples of preservice and professional development for teachers in the area of family involvement in education. This study, developed by the Harvard Family Research Project, was released at the November teleconference, "Partners for Learning: Preparing Teachers to Involve Families," hosted by Vice President Al Gore and U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley.
- *Achieving the Goals: Goal 8 Parental Involvement and Participation* provides resource information on the U.S. Department of Education's efforts to support family involvement in education.
- *"7 Good Practices for Families"* is a colorful poster with useful tips for strengthening family involvement in education at home and in the community. CU

President Clinton's Millennium Initiative Encourages Americans to Honor the Past and Imagine the Future

President Clinton, with bipartisan support from the Congress, has launched a nationwide effort to initiate and support millennium celebrations across the country in the years 1999 and 2000. Through the theme, "honor the past, imagine the future," millennium activities will center on preserving America's heritage and encouraging creative ways to improve our communities, schools and cultural institutions.

The year 2000 marks the 200th anniversary of presidents occupying the White House, the 200th anniversary of the first meeting of Congress in the Capitol, and the 200th anniversary of the creation of the Library of Congress. President Clinton announced that the National Endowment for the Humanities will develop "Millennium Minutes," public service announcements which will highlight our country's cultural heritage. The National Endowment for the Arts currently supports 29 millennium projects for programs which will showcase our nation's artistic creativity and achievements of this century.

The millennium will be celebrated all over the world. The United Kingdom is using the millennium as a time to invest in new museums, parks and infrastructure; Germany will host a world's fair, Expo 2000; religious leaders are emphasizing the renewal of faith; and communities across the United States are already forming 2000 Committees to bring people together to plan for their future. Educators and community leaders are encouraged to draw upon the inspiration and leadership that is alive across the country, as Americans organize local activities to honor their past and explore ways to improve their schools and communities.

The U.S. Department of Education will encourage schools and their supporters to take advantage of the opportunities for learning associated with such a unique time. The U.S. Department of Education's plans include reflecting on the history of education and the strides made in terms of access and excellence, and using the annual *America Goes Back to School* effort in August through October to reinvigorate Americans to get involved and support their schools. For more information about the millennium initiative, visit http://www.whitehouse.gov/Initiatives/Millennium/main.html. CU

1998 Education Budget Provides an Historic Investment in Educational Opportunity

On November 13, President Clinton signed into law the Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill for fiscal year 1998. Key initiatives in the appropriations for fiscal year 1998 include:

- **$16 million for voluntary national tests** in fourth-grade reading and eighth-grade math. The National Assessment Governing Board will oversee the policies and development of the test.
- **$210 million for the America Reads Challenge** to help all children learn to read well and independently by the end of the third-grade. This amount will be available October 1, 1998 if the program is authorized.
- **$425 million for the Technology Literacy Challenge Fund** to help schools pay for computers and software, and provide professional development in the effective integration of technology into the curriculum.
- **$80 million for charter schools** to accelerate progress toward the president's goal of developing 3,000 new charter schools.
- **$7.3 billion for Pell Grants** that increases the maximum Pell Grant to $3,000, and helps low income families send their children to college. In 1998 working or moderate income families maybe eligible for tax cuts if they, or members of their families, attend college.
- **$145 million for comprehensive school reform** to provide competitive awards of $50,000 to help almost 3,000 schools implement successful school designs.
- **$4.8 billion for Special Education Grants** to help states and school districts improve the education of children with disabilities, as called for by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) amendments of 1997.
- **$40 million for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program** to help start-up and expand after-school programs in rural and urban schools across the country, and provide students with academic enrichment, tutoring and a safe haven during after-school hours.
- **$354 million for bilingual and immigrant education** to help school districts teach English to limited English proficient children, and to increase support for school districts enrolling large numbers of recent immigrant students.

For more information about the Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill for fiscal year 1998, call 1-800-USA-LEARN, or visit http://www.ed.gov/offices/OUS/budnews.html. CU

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Religious Communities Can Play an Important Role in Improving Education

Across the nation, religious communities are getting involved in improving education through the U.S. Department of Education's *America Reads Challenge* initiative to help ensure that every child learns to read well and independently by the end of third-grade. By pledging volunteers from their local churches, mosques, and synagogues, faith communities are providing children the extra help they need to succeed in school.

One such example of a partnership among faith communities to improve education is operating in Jackson, Tennessee, a city of approximately 60,000 residents. Three years ago, several churches in Jackson began a tutoring program for children residing in nine public housing communities. The program has grown to encompass more than 20 churches that now tutor 350 children each week with 250 volunteers. One of the original organizers of the program, Jimmy England, outlined necessary first steps faith communities can take to implement similar programs:

- Identify the area in need;
- Establish lines of communication with the proper contacts;
- Evaluate the capability of the churches involved to determine what can be provided;
- Make a plan based on the points above and execute it; and
- Evaluate and adjust the program each year.

The Jackson community identified the need for a tutoring program by focusing on a particular population—those residing in public housing. They determined that the need spanned across grade levels and existed in reading, math and study skills. To validate their assessment of need and to ensure the program was designed to meet those needs, church volunteers made important contacts with the housing authority, public housing residents, school principals, and church leaders.

Armed with this information, the Jackson community determined the capacity of the churches involved to meet those needs by assessing how many children each facility could accommodate and how many volunteers were needed to commit to the project throughout the school year. Church officials also addressed the need for transportation to and from each facility, as well as the quantity of school supplies needed for tutoring to ensure that the program would be successful.

Finally, it was time to put together a plan of action and carry it out. The plan included a schedule for the tutoring session so that students, parents, and volunteers would know what was expected during the time they shared together. Church organizers also addressed other important aspects of the program schedule, such as grouping students or providing one-on-one tutoring, organizing peer tutoring sessions, or pairing older children with younger children. Recruiting and organizing tutors and volunteers was also crucial to the success of the program.

To pledge volunteers from your religious community to help America read, contact Michelle Doyle at (202) 401-1365. For more information about the *America Reads Challenge*, call 1-800-USA-LEARN or visit http://www.ed.gov/inits/americareads. GU

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Community Update

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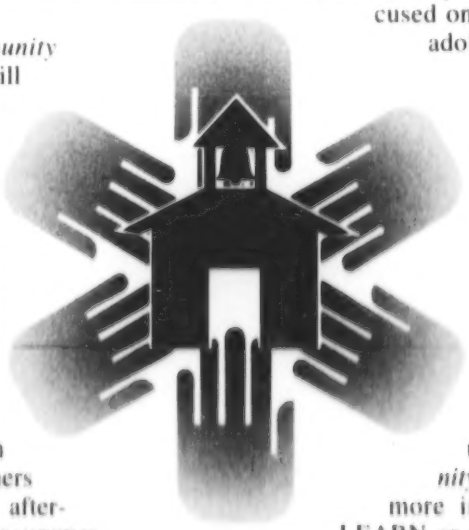
Community Learning Centers Can Expand Learning and Provide a Safe Haven for Students

President Clinton's fiscal year 1999 budget request to Congress will include $200 million for the *21st Century Community Learning Centers* program —$1 billion over five years —which will provide start-up funds to school-community collaborations across the nation to establish or expand before- and after-school, weekend and summer programs for school-age children. The after-school initiative is part of a $20 billion package over five years to improve child care for America's working families, the largest single investment in child care in the nation's history.

The *21st Century Community Learning Centers* program will enable schools to stay open during non-traditional school hours, where mentoring in basic skills, enrichment in the core academic subjects, arts and music classes, recreational activities, and drug and violence prevention can take place in a safe, drug-free, and supervised environment. The program complements President Clinton's *America Reads Challenge* initiative which seeks to match reading partners with children in before- and after-school programs and during the summer.



"Every child needs someplace to go after-school," President Clinton said. "With after-school programs, we cannot only keep our kids healthy and happy and safe, we can help to teach them to say no to drugs, alcohol and crime; yes to reading, sports and computers."

The current U.S. Department of Education budget for the program includes $40 million for the start-up and expansion of after-school programs. As a result, grants will be awarded in May 1998 that will fund approximately 400 *21st Century Community Learning Centers* across the country. Under the current legislation, only rural and inner city public schools, or consortia of such schools, in collaboration with other public and non-profit agencies and organizations, local businesses, educational, cultural and scientific organizations, and other community institutions, are eligible to participate. Applications are currently available from the U.S. Department of Education by calling 1-800-USA-LEARN. Priority will be given to programs focused on learning and those that serve adolescents. The application deadline is March 9, 1998.

The U.S. Department of Education, the National Community Education Association and the National Center for Community Education are offering a series of one-day regional workshops in 14-cities across the country to provide technical assistance and examples of high-quality after-school programs to groups that are interested in applying for grants under the *21st Century Community Learning Centers* program. For more information, call 1-800-USA-LEARN or visit http://www.ed.gov/offices/OERI/21stCCLC/.

The U.S. Department of Education's publications *Family Involvement in Education: A Snapshot of Out-of-School Time*, and *Keeping Schools Open as Community Learning Centers: Extending Learning in a Safe, Drug-free Environment Before and After School* are available by calling 1-800-USA-LEARN. For more information about the U.S. Department of Education's budget for fiscal year 1999, or the *America Reads Challenge* initiative, call 1-800-USA-LEARN.

Tune into the State of American Education address on February 17 at 11:00 a.m. PST, 2:00 p.m. EST. *See page 3 for details.*

Special Insert on Family Involvement *(See inside)*

Community Update *is available on the World Wide Web at http://www.ed.gov/G2K/community.*

February Town Meeting Will Highlight How Schools and Communities Can Support High Standards in Education

The February Satellite Town Meeting will look at ways that schools and communities can support high standards in education and raise student achievement. Live from PBS member station KCTS in Seattle, Washington, U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley will welcome a panel of experts from local schools, businesses and civic organizations, and focus on ways to support high standards in education, including those in the state of Washington.

U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley will discuss how raising expectations and standards can transform teaching and learning, as well as the best ways that schools and communities can help students master the basics. He will also address how teachers and administrators can engage parents and members of the community in establishing high expectations for all children. Entitled "Raising Student Achievement: Schools, Communities and Challenging Standards," the hour-long Satellite Town Meeting will air on Tuesday, February 17, at 8:00 p.m. Eastern time.

The U.S. Department of Education produces the Satellite Town Meeting series in partnership with the National Alliance of Business and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, with support from The Bayer Foundation, The Procter & Gamble Fund, and The SC Johnson Wax Fund. Broadcast and cable partners include Discovery Communications, the Public Broadcasting Service, and Channel One. The program will be closed-captioned and simulcast in Spanish.

The satellite coordinates are as follows:

C-Band: Galaxy 3, Orbital Location 95 degrees West; Transponder 21; Horizontal Polarity; Channel 21; Downlink Frequency 4120 MHZ; Audio Subcarriers 6.2 MHZ (Spanish) and 6.8 MHZ (English).

Ku-Band: Telstar 5, Orbital Location 97 degrees West; Transponder 12; Horizontal Polarity; Channel 12; Downlink Frequency 11936 MHZ; Audio Subcarriers 6.2 MHZ (Spanish) and 6.8 MHZ (English).

To participate in the Satellite Town Meeting, ask your local Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) member station or Chamber of Commerce if your group can use the facility as a downlink site, or call your local public, education, or government access channel. Call 1-800-USA-LEARN for additional information or to register your participation or visit http://www.ed.gov/inits/stm/. CU

Community Partnerships Can Improve Quality of Education for Students with Disabilities, Town Meeting Audience Learns

The January Satellite Town Meeting "Serving Students with Disabilities: What Families, Schools and Communities Need to Know," aired on Tuesday, January 20, before a live audience at the Newseum in Arlington, Virginia. Hosted by U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley and Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services Judith Heumann, the show was also seen live on Kaleidoscope Television, in addition to its regular broadcast partners.

The Satellite Town Meeting focused on ways that families, educators and communities can work together to improve the quality of education for students with disabilities. The program also highlighted the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1997, which will strengthen academic expectations for America's 5.8 million students with disabilities.

"We cannot have an educational system that is defined by low expectations for any child, disabled or non-disabled," U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley said.

The program featured Julie Ashworth, an elementary school teacher at Hawthorne Elementary School in Sioux Falls, South Dakota; Mark Donovan, executive director of the Marriot Foundation for People with Disabilities in Washington, D.C.; Nicole Harper, project director for the Statewide Parent Advocacy Network in Newark, New Jersey; and Bill Henderson, principal of the Patrick O'Hearn Elementary School in Boston, Massachusetts. Panelists encouraged schools and communities to consider the following as they face the challenge of serving students with disabilities in the best possible way:

- Set high expectations for **all** students, including those with disabilities.
- Increase opportunities for parent involvement in their children's education.
- Make sure children with disabilities are included in student assessments, performance goals and reports to the public.
- Support high-quality professional development for all staff involved in the education of children with disabilities.

To obtain more information about IDEA, call 1-800-USA-LEARN, the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services clearinghouse at (202) 205-8241, or visit http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/IDEA. CU

Special February 1998 Insert on Family Involvement

Partnership for Family Involvement in Education

Getting on Track for College

***Editor's Note**: New studies show that almost all parents want their children to go to college. Yet, often parents don't realize that preparing a student for college academically and financially should begin by sixth or seventh grade and continue through middle school and high school. Members of the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education support programs that help middle and high school students get on track for college. Part of a soon-to-be-launched nationwide effort aimed at getting middle school students prepared for college, the Young Scholars Liberty Partnership Program of Utica College is profiled here.*

The Young Scholars Liberty Partnership Program (Young Scholars LPP) is a collaborative project of Utica College and the Utica City School District. The multi-year program was created to produce more students with New York Regents diplomas from the ranks of Utica's diverse student population, and provide support services aimed at raising student expectations and academic performance as a means of getting ready for college.

Participating students must meet certain academic goals throughout their middle and high school years. The Young Scholars LPP will help them work to their full potential and meet those goals by offering year-round educational opportunities and individual support through a structured program of counseling and encouragement.

During the summer of 1997, the Young Scholars LPP served 200 students in grades 7 through 12. Program support continues throughout the year, with services that include tutoring provided by 75 college students (daily, Saturdays, and evenings), PSAT and SAT preparation, counseling and social work services including referral, various workshops, special classes, career exploration, social and enrichment activities, and community service involvement. The Young Scholars LPP also offers a mentor program to provide a one-to-one relationship for students. More than 60 mentors from the community participate in this effort. In addition, Utica College has established a fully endowed college scholarship fund for graduates of the Young Scholars LPP.

The Utica College Young Scholars Liberty Partnership Program features after-school and summer learning programs for middle and high school students, such as this science lab. Through its classes and activities, the program helps students learn to high academic standards and get on track for college.

The Young Scholars LPP participates in the College/Community Partnership Program, a collaboration of the Consortium for the Advancement of Private Higher Education (CAPHE) and the Citizens' Scholarship Foundation of America (CSFA) funded by the DeWitt Wallace-Readers Digest Fund. For more information about the Utica College Young Scholars Liberty Partnership Program, contact Marsha R. Basloe, Young Scholars LPP Director, 1600 Burrstone Road, Utica, New York 13502, or Carol Fox, Director of Curriculum, Utica City Schools, 1710 Mohawk Street, Utica, New York 13502. CU

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley met with Hugh O'Brian—founder and executive director of the Hugh O'Brian Youth Foundation (HOBY)—which recently signed on to the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education. HOBY is a leadership program that introduces high school sophomores to leaders in business, government, and other professions.

Deputy Assistant Secretary of Education W. Wilson Goode recently led a "Conversation on Race" as part of President Clinton's efforts to promote a dialogue among concerned Americans. The discussion was held on an Amtrak train with commuters traveling between Washington, D.C. and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. (Photograph: Maurice Stewart).

AMERICA GOES BACK TO SCHOOL

America Goes Back to School...in February? It's not too early to start thinking about how your community will celebrate children learning when the America Goes Back to School initiative is launched during the months of August through October! Last fall, hundreds of communities around the country welcomed the new school year through partnership events. Start brainstorming with your family, community, business and religious partners now to plan an event for August, September or October, highlighting your partnership's existing efforts or kicking off new activities for the next school year. Watch this space for monthly tips on planning your America Goes Back to School events! CU

Calendar

February 14-17 - *Communities in Schools "Seeking Solutions Through Partnerships for Youth". To register, call 1-888-231-4851 or write to Sheryl Edwards, Washington Inc., 1225 19th Street, N.W., 5th Floor, Washington, D.C. 20036.*

April 14-18 - *Linking Support Systems for Students and Families," the national convention of the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), in Orlando, Florida. For program information, call (301) 657-0270, ext. 216, e-mail mharvey@naspweb.org, or visit http://www.naspweb.org.*

May 7-8 - *Technology in Education Is Everybody's Business," a business-education conference with The Conference Board. For more information, call (212) 339-0345, fax to (212) 980-7014, or visit orders@conference-board.org.*

Employers for Learning of the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education recently met to review outreach strategies with U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley. During the course of the meeting, a presentation was made by Les Hemmings, Chief Learning Officer, John Hancock Mutual Life Insurance Co. (seated to the left of Secretary Riley). For a five-month period this year, Les Hemmings has been "loaned" by his employer to serve as the Partnership's first Executive-On-Rotation at the U.S. Department of Education. He has been actively working with U.S. Department of Education officials to strengthen the Partnership's efforts and activities at the local, regional and national levels

Hemmings Motor News Publisher Encourages Parent Involvement in Children's Education

Studies show that involving parents in children's education improves academic achievement. Terry Ehrich, publisher of Hemmings Motor News in Bennington, Vermont, and a member of the U.S. Department of Education's Partnership for Family Involvement in Education, is encouraging parents, teachers, students, and employers around the nation to build First Day of School programs to promote parental involvement in education.

"Let's make the first day of school a celebration, not a day of misery," Ehrich said. "Let's use it to coach parents in their children's learning and to begin the school year forming and renewing partnerships between parents, teachers and students — between schools and communities — partnerships to improve education all year long."

Ehrich's First Day Foundation is working with schools to help them develop their own First Day of School program or celebration. The foundation is also working with factories, law firms, banks and dozens of other employers throughout Vermont (and in a few test markets nationwide) to help them plan ahead to enable their employees to attend a host of events in schools throughout Vermont for a few hours during the first day of school.

Last year, 11 schools in five towns in Southwestern Vermont developed First Day of School programs which welcomed and encouraged parental involvement in their children's education. Over 120 employers participated, including the Bennington Police Department, the highway crew, town offices and even the regional hospital. Over 1,000 parents visited schools, met with teachers, got previews of the coming school year and obtained tips on how to help make a successful school year for their children. For more information about the First Day of School program, call (802) 447-9625 or visit http://www.firstday.org. For more information about the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education, call 1-800-USA-LEARN or visit http://www.ed.gov/PFIE/. CU

State of American Education Address

U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley will deliver his annual State of American Education address at Nathan Eckstein Middle School in Seattle, Washington, on February 17 at 11:00 a.m. PST and 2:00 p.m. EST. The satellite coordinates are as follows:

***C-Band**: Galaxy 9, Orbital Location 123 degrees West, Transponder 3, Horizontal Polarity, Channel 2, Downlink Frequency 3740 MHZ, Audio Subcarriers 6.2 MHZ (Spanish) and 6.8 MHZ (English).*

***Ku-Band**: SBS 6, Orbital Location 74 degrees West, Transponder 14, Vertical Polarity, Channel 14, Downlink Frequency 12043.5 MHZ, Audio Subcarriers 6.2 MHZ (Spanish) and 6.8 MHZ (English).*

Call 1-800-USA-LEARN for further information or to register your participation.

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Arts Education Partnership Helps Strengthen Schools and Education Standards

A renewed interest in arts education has been stimulated by public concern over the quality of American schools and the performance of our students, as well as research that shows that the arts help children build both basic and advanced thinking skills, and instruct children in diverse modes of thinking and learning. Arts organizations will capitalize on this growing interest and body of research during their annual March celebrations of the importance of dance, music, theater and the visual arts to quality education.

The enactment of the bipartisan Goals 2000: Educate America Act of 1994 recognized the arts as a core area of study in which American children are expected to achieve competency. In response to this challenge, the Arts Education Partnership, a coalition of education, arts, business and funding organizations, is committed to improving the quality of American schools by promoting the arts as a way to help all students achieve high levels of academic, personal, and career success.

The Arts Education Partnership, formed in 1995 through a cooperative agreement between the National Endowment for the Arts, the U.S. Department of Education, the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, and the Council of Chief State School Officers, helps states and local school districts integrate the arts into their educational improvement plans and initiatives. Over 140 national organizations have joined the Arts Education Partnership to affirm the arts as fundamental to quality education, and to help identify ways that the arts can become a central component of state and local education reform.

"Good schools require the arts," said Dick Deasy, Arts Education Partnership director. "They are essential for creating a school culture and community conducive to learning, and they are essential to high academic achievement in core subject areas for all students. The arts are integral to any genuine school improvement effort."

The Arts Education Partnership includes state teams composed of representatives from state education agencies, state arts agencies and state alliance of art educators. The Arts Education Partnership also maintains and links databases on state level policies and funding for the arts, and provides regular reports on how the arts can strengthen education and improve school-community partnerships at the national, state and local levels. Designed to encourage mutually beneficial relationships among the education, arts, community and business sectors, the Arts Education Partnership also coordinates issue-focused task forces to study how the arts can help children develop early reading readiness skills, enhance their creativity, and contribute to their understanding of cultural differences.

For more information about the Arts Education Partnership, call (202) 326-8693 or visit http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/aep/aep.html. The publication *The Arts and Education: Partners in Achieving Our National Education Goals* is available by writing to the Arts Education Partnership, One Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Suite 700, Washington, D.C. 20001. The video "The Arts and Children: A Success Story" is available by calling (202) 347-6352 or (800) 321-4510, extension 241. CU

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Education First: Building America's Future

Editor's note: *On February 17, U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley delivered his fifth annual State of American Education address in Seattle, Washington. Below are excerpts from the speech "Education First: Building America's Future." The entire speech is available on the World Wide Web at http://www.ed.gov/Speeches/980217.html.*

My friends, if ever there was a time to rally around our nation's schools, it is now. We have so much to do. We have more children in our nation's classrooms than ever before and each year they become more crowded. Our children speak more than 100 languages, eager as they are to learn English. They start kindergarten with high hopes, but too many come unprepared.

Reading scores are not where we want them to be. And while we do a very good job at teaching math and science in the early years, we begin to drift in the middle years and fall behind the international standard of excellence.

Drug use is down slightly among teenagers, but our vigilance must never end. And we cannot rest while every day another 3,000 young people start smoking. Think about the consequences—1,000 of these young people will die as a result of tobacco related illnesses. Middle schools are at ground zero in the battle to protect our children's health....

As I visit schools around the country, I see a renewed interest in arts education and a growing concern about the negative impact of cutting art and music out of the curriculum. The creativity of the arts and the joy of music should be central to the education of every American child.

As we seek to address these many challenges, let's recognize that when we Americans get serious about something and focus on it, we usually succeed. That is why, today, over 60 percent of all graduating high school seniors now go directly to college and 25 percent of all college freshmen have taken advanced placement courses....

U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley delivered his fifth annual State of American Education address on February 17, 1998, at Nathan Eckstein Middle School in Seattle, Washington.

Every state in the union is in the process of adopting rigorous academic standards and challenging assessments. Washington State is a national leader in this effort. All 50 states are receiving Goals 2000 funds to raise standards in their own way. This commitment to high standards should not be underestimated.

Milestones in higher education also deserve our attention. Last year, President Clinton took the bold step of asking the American people to consider two very big ideas: one—that every American has the financial support needed to attend at least two years of college; two—that we find a way to give every citizen the incentive and opportunity to learn for a lifetime. Congress responded in strong bipartisan fashion. The result: the $1,500 Hope Scholarship and a 20 percent Lifelong Learning tax

"Lets win this war on ignorance and make the education of all of our children this nation's first priority."

Special Insert on Family Involvement
(See inside)

The E-rate is here! Schools and libraries across the country have until April 14 to gain the maximum benefit of $2.25 billion dollars available in telecommunications discounts which will bring technology into their classrooms and libraries. After April 14, funds will be dispersed on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information, visit http://www/slcfund.org or call (888) 203-8100. For E-Rate and other education technology information, call 1-800-USA-LEARN.

March Town Meeting Will Focus on Preparing Students for College Early

The March Satellite Town Meeting will focus on helping parents, teachers and middle school students understand the payoff of preparing for and going to college. U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley will welcome a panel of parents, educators, and business and community leaders who will explore the vital importance of preparing academically and financially for college early in middle school.

Secretary Riley will discuss the importance of students preparing for college early by building a solid academic foundation and by garnering support from teachers, guidance counselors, and community, business and religious organizations. He will also focus on the best ways to help families pay for college, including scholarships, grants, tax cuts, loans and savings plans. Entitled "Think College Early: Preparing Academically and Financially," the hour-long Satellite Town Meeting will air on Tuesday, March 17, at 8:00 p.m. Eastern time.

The U.S. Department of Education produces the Satellite Town Meeting series in partnership with the National Alliance of Business and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, with support from The Bayer Foundation, The Procter & Gamble Fund, and The SC Johnson Wax Fund. Broadcast and cable partners include Discovery Communications, the Public Broadcasting Service, and Channel One. The program will be closed-captioned and simulcast in Spanish.

The satellite coordinates are as follows:

C-Band: Galaxy 9, Orbital Location 123 degrees West; Transponder 1; Vertical Polarity; Channel 1; Downlink Frequency 3720 MHZ; Audio Subcarriers 6.2 MHZ (Spanish) and 6.8 MHZ (English).

Ku-Band: Telstar 5, Orbital Location 97 degrees West; Transponder 24; Horizontal Polarity; Channel 24; Downlink Frequency 12124 MHZ; Audio Subcarriers 6.2 MHZ (Spanish) and 6.8 MHZ (English).

To participate in the Satellite Town Meeting, ask your local Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) member station or Chamber of Commerce if your group can use the facility as a downlink site, or call your local public, education, or government access channel. Call 1-800-USA-LEARN for additional information or to register your participation, or visit http://www.ed.gov/inits/stm/. CU

High Standards Can Transform Teaching and Learning, Town Meeting Audience Learns

The February Satellite Town Meeting "Raising Student Achievement: Schools, Communities and Challenging Standards," aired on Tuesday, February 17, before a live audience at PBS member station KCTS in Seattle, Washington. Hosted by U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley and Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education Gerald Tirozzi, the teleconference linked hundreds of family, school and community groups across the country.

The Satellite Town Meeting focused on ways that families, educators and communities can work together to raise learning standards and help students master the basics and acquire advanced skills. The program also highlighted ways to define what students should know and be able to do, as well as ways to assess whether or not students have acquired the knowledge and skills to go on to the next grade.

The program featured Michele Anciaux, a parent involvement director for the Washington State Parent Teacher Association; Kerry Killinger, president, chairman and chief executive officer of Washington Mutual, Inc.; John Stanford, superintendent of Seattle Public Schools; and Carol Coe, the 1994 Washington State Teacher of the Year and a recipient of the Miliken Family Foundation National Educator Award. Panelists emphasized the following to help families, schools and communities face the challenge of setting high standards and raising student achievement:

- Clear, high standards can help students to master the basics in subjects such as reading, writing and mathematics.
- Challenging standards can help hold students and schools accountable for learning, and new kinds of assessments can help show which schools and students need extra help.
- Teachers and principals are key to helping students meet high standards, and need extra support and professional development to enable them to teach to the new standards.
- Everyone—parents, business leaders, community members—can benefit from clear, high standards, can help establish them, and put them into practice.

The U.S. Department of Education's publication *Strengthen Your Child's Future* and information pertaining to the national voluntary tests in math and reading are available by calling 1-800-USA-LEARN. CU

Special March 1998 Insert on Family Involvement

Partnership for Family Involvement in Education

Trust Insurance Company Emphasizes Employee Involvement in Education

Editor's note: *Members of the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education support efforts in their community that encourage learning at all levels. These activities are evidence of the success of the Partnership's vision: family involvement in education includes efforts by all adults who can mentor, tutor or volunteer to help children learn. The following is a summary of what one member of the Partnership's Employers for Learning is doing to encourage employee involvement in education.*

The Trust Insurance Company, an employer with 340 associates in Taunton, Massachusetts, actively supports the mission of the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education through its community and corporate programs. Trust associates are involved in the U.S. Department of Education's *America Reads Challenge* initiative, as well as other programs that are strategically designed to strengthen literacy development in young children and to encourage career development among high school students.

Trust associates are encouraged to get involved with the company's literacy improvement efforts through the Read Aloud Program at Trust Care, the company's on-site child care center for children ages six weeks to six years. Trust associates read with children at the center and help develop related activities that link thinking with reading.

During the summer, the Trust Insurance Company promotes the Trust Summer Reading Program for children of Trust associates. The Trust Insurance Company also partners with Barnum School, a local public preschool-through-kindergarten. Trust associates read with preschoolers on company time and present activities that link the stories with real life. All associates at Trust are actively encouraged to get involved in the Quality Time Program, an effort that promotes a variety of educational activities with children such as reading with a child, reviewing his or her homework, volunteering in a classroom, and assuming civic leadership in a program such as Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts.

Irene Stone, senior data entry operator at the Trust Insurance Company, reads to the children of Trust Care.

The Trust Insurance Company also participates in mentor programs. For example, in one mentoring program, Trust associates volunteer at a local high school eight times during the school year as a means of encouraging career development. This mentor program communicates to students the importance of getting a good education and developing good work habits for staying on the right track.

For more information about employee involvement in education at the Trust Insurance Company, write to Abby Smith, Trust Insurance Company, 425 John Quincy Adams Road, Taunton, Massachusetts 02780, or e-mail her at asmith@trustinsurance.com. CU

The April issue of Community Update will highlight ways to help students prepare for college early.

*Lauren Kinley (left), a member of the Palm Glades Girl Scout Council, tutors Zachary Pollick (right) at the after-school child care program at Panther Run Elementary School in Lake Worth, Florida. The Palm Glades Girl Scout Council uses the READ*WRITE*NOW! program to train girls to be reading tutors, reinforcing skill and memory through an interactive approach. Girls who complete the training and tutor at after-school programs receive community service recognition.*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The U.S. Department of Education has just released *A Compact for Learning: An Action Handbook for Family-School-Community Partnerships*. The guidebook illustrates five steps of a process in which school partners develop, use, evaluate, and strengthen a school compact for learning. For a free copy while supplies last, call 1-800-USA-LEARN or visit the Web site at http://www.ed.gov/pubs/Compact/.
- The fifth annual Conference on Character Building, sponsored by The Communitarian Network, will take place at the Marvin Center, George Washington University in Washington, D.C. on June 4-5. National leaders, researchers, and educators will address critical issues, including family involvement in education, character and service learning, character building in higher education, and more. For registration information, contact Nora Pollock, Conference Coordinator, at (202) 994-3008, by fax at (202) 994-1606, by e-mail at npollock@gwis2.circ.gwu.edu, or write to The Communitarian Network, 2130 H Street, N.W., Suite 714J, Washington, D.C. 20052.
- The 1998 NAPE Symposium on Partnerships in Education, The Power of Partnerships: Linking Education to the 21st Century, will be held at the Los Angeles Airport Marriott on October 19-24. The Symposium will provide attendees with cutting-edge strategies and a broad range of professional development opportunities. For more information call (703) 836-4880 or visit the NAPE homepage at NAPEhq.org.
- The January issue of *Community Update* highlighted a tutoring program organized and operated by more than 20 churches in Jackson, Tennessee. This program has two new dimensions. First, in cooperation with the public housing authority and the public school system, the tutoring program offers a Resident Initiative Program. Households with children may earn up to two free months of rent when parents attend parent-teacher conferences and are involved in school activities, and when children achieve good grades, improve their achievement and behavior, and attend tutoring classes regularly. Second, the Jackson, Tennessee, tutoring program has created a Web site with program information and examples of procedures and forms used to coordinate the program among churches and schools at http://www.public.usit.net/church. For more information, contact Michelle Doyle by e-mail at Michelle_Doyle@ed.gov.

Calendar

April 14-18 *"Linking Support Systems for Students and Families," the national convention of the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), in Orlando, Florida. For program information, call (301) 657-0270, ext. 216, e-mail mharvey@naspweb.org, or visit http://www.naspweb.org*

May 7-8 *"Technology in Education Is Everybody's Business," a business-education conference with The Conference Board. For more information, call (212) 339-0345, fax to (212) 980-7014, or visit orders@conference-board.org*

America Goes Back to School Planning Tip: Use this time to take stock of who in your community can be a resource to help with your *America Goes Back to School* event in the fall! Pull together a local steering committee to start planning your event, and think about resources such as parent organizations, community groups, businesses, religious organizations, colleges and universities, the mayor and city council, and others!

President Clinton Sends 1999 Education Budget to Congress

President Clinton's 1999 balanced budget proposal combines fiscal responsibility with the investments needed to help America prepare for the 21st century. The budget seeks to reduce class size, modernize schools, improve teacher quality, raise standards in our nation's urban schools, get technology into the classroom and give American families the financial support they need to go on to college or graduate school.

Key priorities of the president's 1999 budget request for the U.S. Department of Education include:

- **$175 million for schools to begin comprehensive reform**, up $30 million, to be used to implement research-based school designs, including those of the New American Schools, and others.
- **$476 million for raising standards through Goals 2000 Grants,** up $10 million, to expand support for state and local efforts in all 50 states and to set and implement standards of excellence to improve teaching and learning.
- **$721 million for Educational Technology**, up $136 million, to ensure that classrooms have up-to-date technology and teachers who are prepared to use it, in order to improve the quality of instruction in the core subjects.
- **$260 million for the America Reads Challenge**, including $50 million in new funds and a $210 million "advance" appropriated in 1998 that becomes available in 1999. The *America Reads Challenge* will enlist and train tutors in the Reading Corps to help children learn to read well and independently by the end of third-grade, and work with teachers, families and community organizations by providing reading assistance after school, on weekends and during the summer.
- **$7.8 billion for helping schools impacted by poverty through Title I Grants**, an increase of $392 million, to improve school instruction in the basics for educationally disadvantaged students.
- **$200 million for keeping schools open as 21st Century Community Learning Centers**, an increase of $160 million, to support before- and after-school programs that will keep schools open as safe havens while providing extended learning activities to improve student achievement.

President Clinton is also proposing a significant investment for new programs in the following areas:

- **Over $19 billion in interest-free bonds for school modernization and construction** to help school districts pay for the construction of new academic facilities to reduce overcrowding, or for the renovation of all schools that need extensive repairs to make them safer and raise the quality of education.
- **$1.1 billion for a Class Size Reduction Initiative**, a new program that would recruit and train 100,000 new teachers over the next seven years in order to help reduce class size to an average of 18 in grades one through three.
- **$200 million for Education Opportunity Zones**, a new program that will make approximately 50 grants to poor urban and rural districts to improve accountability, turn around failing schools, improve the quality of teaching, and expand public school choice.
- **$67 million for a new Teacher Recruitment and Preparation Program**, which would recruit new teachers for the high-poverty urban and rural areas that have the most difficulty in attracting and retaining a high-quality teaching force.

President Clinton is also proposing initiatives to help students and families prepare and pay for college:

- **$900 million to expand Work-Study**, up $70 million, to reach President Clinton's goal of giving one million recipients the opportunity to work their way through college.
- **$7.6 billion for the Pell Grant Program**, an increase of $249 million, to raise the maximum Pell award from $3,000 to $3,100 and provide Pell Grants to over 3.9 million low-income students.

In addition, a combination of budget and tax initiatives were signed into law last summer as part of the balanced budget agreement and will go into effect this year:

- **$6.7 billion in HOPE Scholarship and Lifetime Learning tax credits** for more than 12 million postsecondary students and their families in 1999. As estimated 5.5 million students would receive HOPE tax credits of up to $1,500 for the first two years of college, while an additional 7.1 million students would benefit from up to $1,000 in Lifetime Learning tax credits for upgrading skills for the third and fourth years of college, graduate school or other training.
- **College Education IRAs** are available to families who may now deposit $500 per year into an Education IRA for each child under 18. Interest on these accounts is exempt from taxation if used for higher education.

Additional information pertaining to the U.S. Department of Education's 1999 budget is available by visiting http://www.ed.gov/offices/OUS/Budget99/. CU

The White House Millennium Project encourages all citizens to honor the past and imagine the future. Start planning today to determine how your community will commemorate its rich education history, celebrate its education successes, and provide every student with the skills to succeed in the new millennium. Check future issues of Community Update for more information about the U.S. Department of Education's involvement in the Millenium Project, and ways your community can become involved.

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Excerpts from State of American Education speech continued:

credit worth up to $1,000 this year and $2,000 in a few short years. These two big ideas are as significant to today's students as the G.I. Bill was to returning veterans....

The Congress has also supported the president's call to increase Pell Grants for low-income students to $3,000, the largest increase in two decades. Pell Grants are the heart of student financial aid. We propose to increase Pell Grants again this year along with TRIO and work-study....

Helping children develop is the first step to starting our young people on the path to college....You can't do much of anything if you lack the ability to read. This is why I am so encouraged that 36 states are committed to making sure that every child in this nation can read well and independently by the end of third-grade, if not earlier.

I am pleased to tell you that 915 colleges and universities are supporting the *America Reads Challenge* by encouraging their work-study students to become reading tutors and mentors. Twenty-eight colleges and universities here in Washington are now a part of this growing effort....

Helping children to be good readers goes to the very heart of President Clinton's new $12 billion class size reduction initiative that will add 100,000 well-trained teachers to our nation's teaching corps. Common sense tells you that when children are in big classes they don't get the individual attention they need.

This is why we want to lower the average class size to 18 in grades one through three. Reducing class size improves discipline and raises student achievement. More individual attention by teachers early on can help all children and especially those with learning disabilities and other special needs....

The success of any effort to reduce class size ultimately depends on the quality of the teachers and giving teachers the support, time and tools to succeed....If you reduce class size it makes good sense to build more schools and modernize old ones. America's schools are simply wearing out at a time when we face many years of record-breaking enrollment....This is why I urge Congress to support the president's call for a new $22 billion school construction initiative to help communities modernize schools and build new ones....

As we build new schools, let's also make sure that they are wired "smart." That is why the Federal Communications Commission established the E-rate, a new $2.25 billion fund available each year to make sure that every school—public, private and parochial—and every library will get the technology they need to teach for the future....

If we are going to be successful in preparing our young people to step into the future, we must have higher expectations for our children, a commitment to high standards and real accountability. This is why I support voluntary national tests for fourth-grade reading and eighth-grade math....

Let's win this war on ignorance and make the education of all of our children this nation's first priority....This is America's first challenge and with your help, we will succeed. CU

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